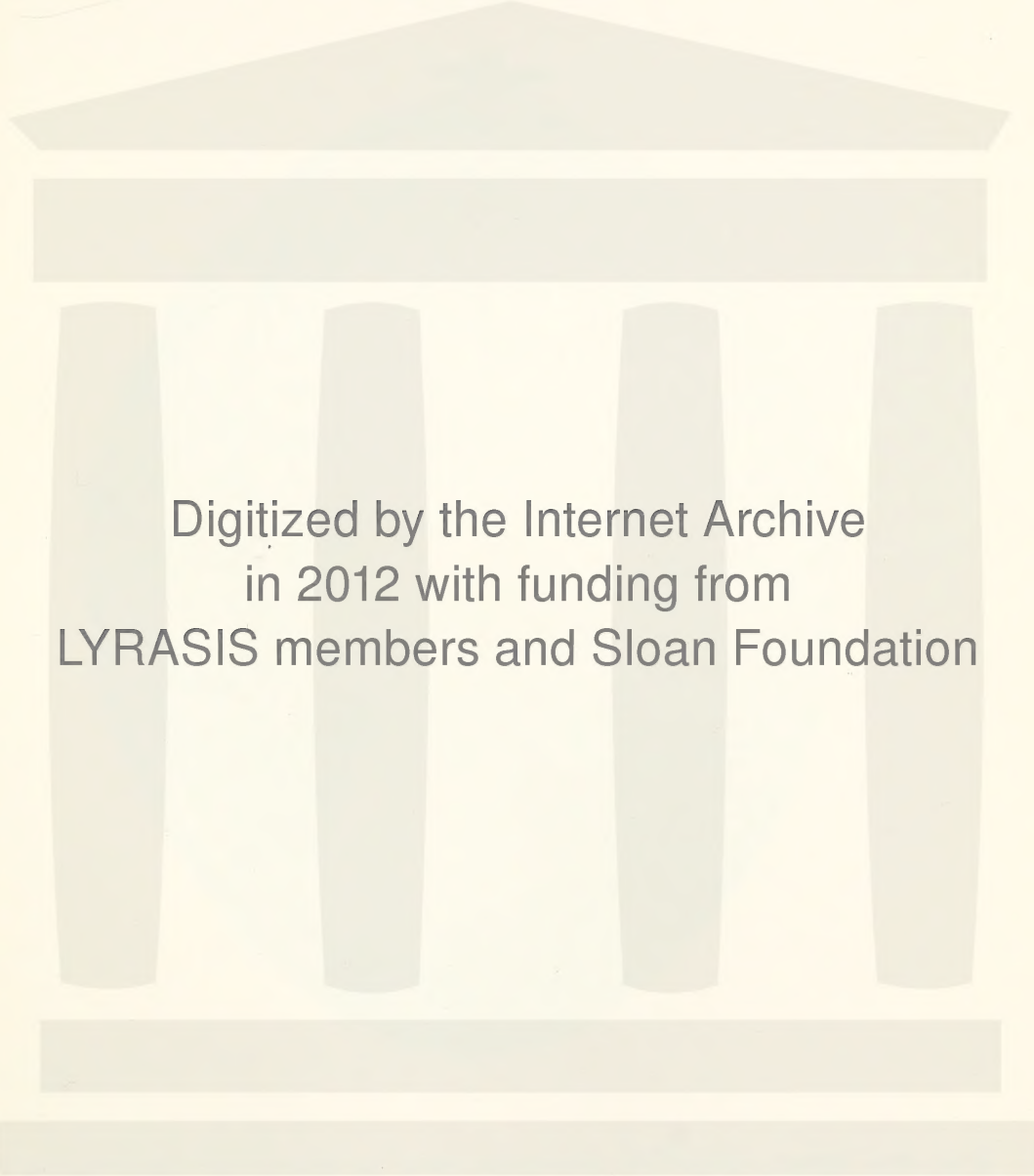


Publications
of the
STATE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

THE JOHN GRAY BLOUNT
PAPERS



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John Gray Blount (1752-1833). Photograph from the files of the State Department of Archives and History.

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Raleigh

The John Gray Blount Papers

Edited by
WILLIAM H. MASTERSON

Volume III
1796-1802

Raleigh
State Department of Archives and History
1965

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FOREWORD

The first two volumes of *The John Gray Blount Papers* were published in 1952 and 1959 respectively. These volumes were edited by Dr. Alice B. Keith of Meredith College in Raleigh. Dr. Keith originally planned to continue the series, but illness prevented her doing so.

The State Department of Archives and History was fortunate to obtain the services of Dr. William H. Masterson of Rice University in Houston, Texas, to assume editorship of the Blount series. Dr. Masterson, biographer of William Blount, is well qualified to continue the work begun by Dr. Keith. The department is grateful to both Dr. Keith and Dr. Masterson for their co-operation and for the work which they have done in producing documentary volumes of outstanding merit. Additional papers will be published later, and the continued association with Dr. Masterson is anticipated with pleasure by the staff of the State Department of Archives and History. Acknowledgment should also be made to Mr. Noble J. Tolbert and Mrs. Barbara R. Hall, formerly of the Division of Publications, and to Mrs. Nancy S. Bartlett, currently on the staff, for their help in seeing Volume III through the press.

Memory F. Mitchell, *Editor*

July 1, 1965

PREFACE

The letters in this volume are principally from the John Gray Blount Papers in the State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. They comprise only a part of the total manuscripts in that collection. However, items dealing with the Blounts that have an interest in themselves or which are useful in clarifying other papers have been added from collections in other repositories. These include the Ernest Haywood Papers in the Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; the Papers of Thomas Hart in the Library of Congress; and the John Gray Blount Letter Book in the New-York Historical Society. This latter manuscript is fragmentary, covering only the period from February 15, 1796, to October 1, 1797, but it is invaluable in providing information about matters and people in the Blount Papers. From a note on the front it appears to have been picked up by a Union soldier in "Carolina" and carried to New York. The original entries were obviously written by one of Blount's clerks, apparently at times by dictation, so that the spelling and other details are even more careless than those of the letters received, and there are addresses only in rare cases.

The general editorial format of the first two volumes of *The John Gray Blount Papers* has been followed in the present one. Unless otherwise noted the letters are from the John Gray Blount Papers. For the most part each manuscript has been printed verbatim. However, Blount's correspondents were often unlettered people so that at times some editorial emendations have been made. These consist principally of clarifying the text by the insertion, and at other times by the removal, of periods or other punctuation marks where necessary for easier understanding of the author's meaning. Enclosures are printed with their covering letters rather than by their own original date. Only the address of the letter (where it is on the original) has been printed; subsequent notes, postal marks, and postage have not been reproduced. Also decorative marks and underlining by the authors of the letters have been omitted. Numbers in brackets within the body of various letters refer to pages of the original manuscript.

In any such correspondence as Blount's, the matter of identification of people raises problems. An attempt has been made

in this volume to identify, or mention the failure to identify, each writer of a letter or each person who had seemed to be important to the author or recipient of the letter or the action described in it. Events and terms are explained when not in a standard dictionary or of general knowledge or when they are technical or very unusual.

For the sake of brevity John Gray Blount is editorially referred to as Blount except where clarification is necessary.

Finally, although they contain many of the places referred to in the text, the originals of the Price and Strother maps reproduced in this volume were too large to reduce successfully. Hence, citations to geographical locations are usually made to maps in the earlier volumes of these papers or to other sources, and the Price and Strother maps, although they contain valuable information, are included primarily because of the frequent reference to them in the text.

The editing of manuscripts at a distance from their repository must inevitably place the editor under more than his usually heavy obligations. These are gratefully acknowledged. Mrs. Memory F. Mitchell and the members of her staff at the State Department of Archives and History have been outstandingly cooperative, especially Mrs. Mary Frances Kelly in typing the material from the original manuscripts. The editor is also greatly indebted to Dr. Christopher Crittenden, Director of the Department, and to Mr. William S. Powell, Librarian of the North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill, for expert editorial advice and essential and elusive geographical material. The very great debts of many kinds that are due Dr. Alice Barnwell Keith, the editor of Volumes I and II of this series, will be obvious to the most casual reader of these pages and are most explicitly acknowledged. Finally, I should like to express thanks for service beyond the call of duty to Mrs. Mary Buvens, my long-suffering and extremely able typist-assistant, and to my research assistants, Mr. Thomas Giesen and Mr. James Doyle, whose contributions in time, travel, and intelligence have been of a value that only an editor can know.

William Masterson

Rice University
Houston, Texas
July 1, 1965

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INTRODUCTION

The years covered by this volume of Blount papers represent in several ways a climactic period in the history of the family. Both in their business and personal aspects the Blounts underwent experiences in these seven years that transformed them personally as well as the structure and position of the family.

Political and economic storms that swept western Europe and America during the final decade of the eighteenth century battered the Blounts along with thousands of their countrymen. All of the family's economic supports were heavily damaged. Shipping, even by neutrals, became increasingly precarious as both England and France, locked in the struggles of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, sought to strangle the West Indian colonial lifelines of their enemies. At least one Blount ship was confiscated and Blount cargoes were lost in this conflict. In addition, as the West Indian trade became more dangerous the Blounts turned to Philadelphia and New York markets only to find that others had done likewise and that their naval stores, lumber products, and fish were in an increasingly competitive market, where the somewhat lackadaisical packing and packaging methods of the small-scale Carolinian could not successfully compete.

These operations were made more difficult by the Blounts' lack of fluid capital. This "article," scarce at all times, was now being steadily drawn off into the wildly spiraling western land speculation that engrossed the Blounts as it did most other Americans in the 1790's. Compelled to operate on credit, the brothers and their associates were caught in a cycle in which lack of cash prevented them from buying the land outright and completing titles, while sales to others could not be made (and cash thereby obtained) until they could deliver the completed titles. Meanwhile, the land taxes, small per acre but large for the gigantic total acreages involved, fell due with inexorable regularity.

The Blounts attempted to meet these problems in several ways. Their principal partner was the engaging David Allison, an incurable gambler. Little is known of Allison, except that he was a lawyer who had known the Blounts for some years and had lived in both North Carolina and Tennessee before moving

to Philadelphia as an eastern salesman for western lands.¹ He became fatally involved with the arch-speculators Robert Morris and James Wilson, but even without their fall in 1797 he would have been too compromised to have survived the general collapse of that year.

Besides their own financial involvement with Allison, the extent of which was apparently unknown to them, the Blounts also formed local companies with such partners as Jacob Rhodes, a Robeson County farmer-speculator; George Ogg; and John and James Porterfield. The purpose of such companies was to accumulate enough capital from the various members to make at least some down payment on, or pay the entry fees of, gigantic tracts of land that were then to be sold by their eastern contacts such as Allison to James Wilson, Robert Morris, or other "monied" easterners. The usual failure to dispose of the land rapidly enough to meet final payments and local taxes often caused members such as Ogg and Rhodes to seek to sell out, to accuse the Blounts of bad faith, and sometimes to sue for their investments plus interest.

The Blounts also used their mercantile connections to try to raise cash, sometimes with grave results for themselves, such as the debts to the Porterfields and James Crugor, which haunted them for years. They also sought to reach European capital directly through such agents and friends as James Mountfloreance and the mysterious Doctor Romaine, later to be involved with William Blount in his conspiracy. These attempts failed even more completely than the American "companies" and though they never ceased to charm Allison, Blount himself finally became disenchanted with them.²

For this dizzy balancing of speculation on credit could in fact only be maintained while European capital and sales continued, and when these supports were withdrawn by the prolonged Napoleonic Wars, America plunged into its first national panic and depression.³ In this cataclysm John Gray Blount, by the most stringent economy, kept the firm of John Gray and Thomas Blount barely afloat. Much of the material in this book

¹ Alice Barnwell Keith (ed.), *The John Gray Blount Papers* (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 2 volumes, 1952, 1959), I, 85; II, *passim*, especially 197, n.50, hereinafter cited as Keith, *Blount Papers*.

² Blount to James C. Mountfloreance, March 18, 1796; and Mountfloreance to Blount, July 21, 1796. These two letters are published in this volume. Letters published in this volume and also cited in the footnotes will hereinafter be cited as, "in this volume." They are arranged chronologically and may be easily found.

³ Jeannette P. and Roy F. Nichols, *The Republic of the United States* (New York: D. Appleton Century Company, 2 volumes, 1939-1942), I, 310.

deals with the vital round of local mercantile operations—buying, leasing, selling, and shipping—that continued to be the backbone of all Blount operations, however less dramatic than the specious buying and selling of millions of acres of land. William Blount, for example, lacking mercantile resources at his disposal (for no cash could be spared him), and closer to the land speculation Lorelei, collapsed into complete bankruptcy, a debacle complicated by the political conspiracy he entered in order to save his economic commitments.⁴

Blount fortunes touched bottom sometime in 1798 or 1799. After this the Franco-American Convention of 1800, followed by the short but helpful Anglo-French truce between 1801 and 1803, eased mercantile harassment while the depression ran its course and a wrung-out but more realistic national economy emerged. Economically, then, the Blounts in the years 1796-1802 first rose to the heights of an activity made possible by earlier years of shrewd hard work and then plunged into near bankruptcy, to emerge dizzy but sounder after 1800. The last letters of the book, reflecting Blount interest in the new cotton gin, are significant.

Politically these years also saw various degrees of success. In 1796 all seemed bright. William Blount, after successfully bringing his territorial governorship to a close, was triumphantly elected as the first Tennessee Senator, while Thomas Blount was returning to the House of Representatives seat he had held since 1793, and John Gray Blount sat in the North Carolina Senate from Beaufort County. Then the disastrous exposure of William Blount's involvement in a plot calling for western dissidents to co-operate with England in the seizure of Spanish Louisiana and possibly Florida not only caused his expulsion from the Senate but also, in connection with widespread land frauds in which the Blount firm was implicated, defeated all Blount political ambitions. William died before any but local rehabilitation could occur; John Gray, seldom deeply interested in politics, never returned to public life; and Thomas, the most politically-minded of the older brothers, was returned to the State legislature only in 1799 and not to the House of Representatives until 1805. Meanwhile, John Gray and Thomas Blount had to stand trial for land frauds, though they were acquitted. The degree of their guilt can probably never be estab-

⁴ William H. Masterson, *William Blount* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1954), 304-305, hereinafter cited as Masterson, *William Blount*.

lished from the remaining records, but in any case the trial and public censure do not seem to have broken off their close relations with public officials such as the State Treasurer, Solicitor General, and entry takers, whose accommodation to Blount convenience certainly approached, if it did not transcend, the limits of legality.⁵ Blount relations with sheriffs seem to have depended on local friendships or animosities or on local political situations.

Finally, throughout these economic and political upheavals, the years between 1796 and 1802 saw the inevitable changes in the family membership. One Blount brother, Jacob, Jr., married and most of the married brothers' families increased during these years; but the malignant fevers and medical ignorance also took their toll. William Blount died on March 21, 1800, and Jacob, Jr., on January 22, 1801. William's wife, Mary Grainger Blount, followed him in November, 1802, and John Gray lost a child in that year. Outside the family, the deaths of such familiar figures as Jacob Rhodes, David Allison, and Titus Ogden and the appearance of new faces and correspondents toward the last of 1802 also mark the closing of a chapter in the family history.

⁵ David Allison to Blount, February 13, 1796, n.43; Thomas Blount to John Haywood, October 18, November 5, 1797; and William Blount to John Haywood, May 28, 1796, in this volume.

JOHN GRAY BLOUNT PAPERS (1796-1802) INCLUDED
IN THIS VOLUME

LETTERS FOR 1796

1. John Porterfield to John Gray Blount, January [n.d.], 1796.
2. David Allison to John Gray Blount, January 7, 1796.
3. Gaeb. Jordan to John Gray Blount, [January 8, 1796].
4. Benjamin Atkinson to John Gray Blount, January 9, 1796.
5. Richard and James Potter to John Gray Blount, [January 10, 1796].
6. J. W. G. Prescott to John Gray Blount, January 19, 1796.
7. David Allison to John Gray Blount, January 21, 1796.
8. Abner Neale to John Gray Blount, February 5, 1796.
9. David Allison to [John Gray Blount], February 5, 1796.
10. Lewis Meminger to John Gray Blount, February 11, 1796.
11. François Xavier Martin to John Gray Blount, February 11, 1796.
12. David Allison to [John Gray Blount], February 13, 1796.
13. John Gray Blount to William Pennock, February 17, 1796.
14. Thomas Turner to John Gray Blount, February 17, 1796.
15. François Xavier Martin to John Gray Blount, February 17, 1796.
16. John Gray Blount to Benjamin Woods, February 18, 1796.
17. David Allison to John Gray Blount, February 18, 1796.
18. David Allison to [John Gray Blount], February 25, 1796.
19. Benjamin Atkinson to John Gray Blount, February 28, 1796.
20. Amos Johnston to John Gray Blount, March 1, 1796.
21. John Gray [and Thomas] Blount to Richard Lake, March 3, 1796.
22. David Allison to [John Gray Blount], March 3, 1796.
23. John Gray Blount to Richard and James Potter, March 3, 1796.
24. Richard and James Potter to John Gray Blount, March 3, 1796.
25. Lewis Meminger to John Gray Blount, March 3, 1796.
26. Henry Tuley to John Gray Blount, March 3, 1796.
27. David Allison to John Gray Blount, March 11, 1796.
28. Amos Johnston to John Gray Blount, March 11, 1796.
29. John Gray Blount to Thomas Blount [with enclosure], March 14, 1796.
30. John Gray Blount to Peter Mallet[t], March 18, 1796.
31. John Gray Blount to William Murdock, March 18, 1796.
32. John Gray Blount to James C. Mountflorencia, March 18, 1796.
33. Ben Atkinson to John Gray Blount, March 21, 1796.
34. Amos Johnston to John Gray Blount, March 22, 1796.
35. Abner Neale to John Gray Blount, March 31, 1796.
36. [David Allison to John Gray Blount], April 1, 1796.
37. David Allison and Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount and John Haywood, April 1, 1796.
38. John Gray Blount to John Hall, April 3, 1796.

39. David Allison to [John Gray Blount], April 7, 1796.
40. James Maxwell to Abner Neale [with enclosure], April 9, 1796.
41. David Allison to John Gray Blount, April 15, 1796.
42. Abner Neale to [John Gray Blount], April 15, 1796.
43. Benjamin Atkinson to John Gray Blount, April 18, 1796.
44. David Allison to John Gray Blount, April 22, 1796.
45. Amos Johnston to John Gray Blount, April 25, 1796.
46. Robert Ponton to John Gray Blount, April 25, 1796.
47. Abner Neale to [John Gray Blount], April 27, 1796.
48. David Allison to John Gray Blount, April 29, 1796.
49. George Ogg to John Gray Blount, [May ?, 1796].
50. John Gray [& Thomas] Blount to William C. Lake, May 6, 1796.
51. F. X. Martin to [John Gray Blount, May 6, 1796].
52. Edward Jones to John Gray Blount, May 6, 1796.
53. Jacob Rhodes to John Gray Blount, May 6, 1796.
54. David Allison to John Gray Blount, May 6, 1796.
55. John Gray Blount to Peter Schermerhorn, May 13, 1796.
56. John Gray Blount to Jacob Rhodes, May 17, 1796.
57. F. X. Martin to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], May 21, 1796.
58. John and Joseph Mitchell to John Gray Blount, May 23, 1796.
59. David Allison to John Gray Blount, May 27, 1796.
60. William Blount to John Haywood With note by John Gray Blount, [May 28, 1796].
61. Jacob Rhodes to John Gray Blount, June 2, 1796.
62. Henry Tuley to John Gray Blount, June 16, 1796.
63. John Gray Blount to Robert Smithey, June 17, 1796.
64. Mary Fitzgerald to [Henry Williamson, with enclosure], June 24, 1796.
65. John Gray Blount to Thomas Smith, June 25, 1796.
66. John Gray and Thomas Blount to Richard Lake, June 25, 1796.
67. John Gray Blount to Malcom Gillis, June 26, 1796.
68. John Gray Blount to Thomas Smith, June 26, 1796.
69. William Murdock to John Gray Blount [with enclosures], June 27, 1796.
70. John Gray [& Thomas] Blount to J. W. G. Prescott, June 29, 1796.
71. Robeson Mumford to John Gray Blount, July 2, 1796.
72. J. W. G. Prescott to John Gray Blount, July 4, 1796.
73. Benjamin Atkinson to John Gray Blount, July 7, 1796.
74. Benjamin Smith to John Davis, July 17, 1796.
75. James Cole Mountfloreance to John Gray Blount, July 21, 1796.
76. Abner Neale to John Gray Blount, July 21, 1796.
77. John Gray Blount to Robert Smithey, July 24, 1796.
78. J. W. G. Prescott to John Gray Blount, July 27, 1796.
79. J. W. G. Prescott to John Gray Blount, July 28, 1796.
80. John Gray Blount to David Allison, August 2, 1796.
81. Gabriel Ragsdale to John Gray Blount, August 4, 1796.
82. Gabriel Ragsdale to Richard Blackledge, August 6, 1796.
83. William Thomson to John Gray Blount, August 8, 1796.
84. Henry Tuley to John Gray Blount, August 9, 1796.
85. Abner Neale to John Gray Blount, August 17, 1796.

86. David Allison to John Gray Blount, August 19, 1796.
87. Willie Jones to John Gray Blount, August 21, 1796.
88. J. W. G. Prescott to John Gray Blount, August 22, 1796.
89. John Gray Blount to Joseph Ross, August 25, 1796.
90. John Gray Blount to Robert Smithey, August 25, 1796.
91. John Gray Blount to Willie Blount, September 15, 1796.
92. Mary Blount to Susannah Harvey, September 26, 1796.
93. David Allison to Gabriel Ragsdale [copy], October 4, 1796.
94. Edward Jones to Richard Blackledge [with enclosures], October 10, 1796.
95. Gabriel Ragsdale to John Gray Blount, October 20, 1796.
96. David Allison to John Gray Blount, October 21, 1796.
97. John Gray Blount to David Allison, October 25, 1796.
98. Henry Williamson to Mary Fitzgerald, October 29, 1796.
99. Gabriel Ragsdale to John Gray Blount, October 30, 1796.
100. Mary Blount to [Susannah Harvey], November 2, 1796.
101. James Robertson to John Gray Blount, November 2, 1796.
102. F. X. Martin to John Gray Blount, November 5, 1796.
103. John Gray Blount to François X. Martin, November 8, 1796.
104. John Gray [& Thomas] Blount to Hodgson and Nicholson, November 13, 1796.
105. John Gray Blount to Thomas Smith, November 16, 1796.
106. John Gray Blount to William Rhodes, Jr., November 17, 1796.
107. John Gray Blount to John Wallace, November 17, 1796.
108. David Allison to John Gray Blount, November 25, 1796.
109. Joseph Martin to John Gray Blount, November 26, 1796.
110. John Allen to John Gray Blount, November 28, 1796.
111. Benjamin Atkinson to Benjamin Blackledge, December 7, 1796.
112. Mary Blount to [Susannah Harvey, December 7, 1796].
113. Gabriel Ragsdale to John Gray Blount, [December 12, 1796].
114. David Allison to John Gray Blount, December 24, 1796.
115. Murdock MacLean to John Gray Blount, [December 27, 1796].
116. David Allison to [John Gray Blount, 1796?].

LETTERS FOR 1797

1. Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount, January 1, 1797.
2. Nathan Tisdale to John Gray Blount, January 5, 1797.
3. Moses Thompson to John Gray Blount, January 16, 1797.
4. John Carson to John Gray Blount, January 24, 1797.
5. Mary Ragsdale to John Gray Blount, January 24, 1797.
6. John Gray and Thomas Blount to William C. Lake, January 26, 1797.
7. Hugh Williamson to John Gray Blount, February 2, 1797.
8. John Gray Blount to Captain J. L. B. Monyard, February 8, 1797.
9. John Gray Blount to Captain Warren Ashley, February 8, 1797.
10. William W. Wallace to John Gray Blount, February 17, 1797.
11. B. Cousin to John Gray Blount, February 22, 1797.
12. Gabriel Ragsdale to John Gray Blount, March 4, 1797.
13. Hugh Williamson to John Gray Blount, March 8, 1797.
14. Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount, March 28, 1797.
15. Mary Blount to [Susannah Harvey], April 1, [1797?].

16. John Wallace to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], April 8, 1797.
17. Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount, April 14, 1797.
18. William Blount to [Thomas Hart], April 14, 1797.
19. Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount, April 18, 1797.
20. Henry Williamson to John Gray Blount, April 24, 1797.
21. Hugh Williamson to John Gray Blount, April 30, 1797.
22. John Gray and Thomas Blount to J. W. G. Prescott, April 30, 1797.
23. John Lewis Taylor to [John Gray Blount], May 4, 1797.
24. Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount, May 9, 1797.
25. Benjamin Coakley to John Wallace, May 9, 1797.
26. John Gray Blount to Johnathan Price, May 11, 1797.
27. Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount, May 23, 1797.
28. John Gray Blount to William Murdock, May 31, 1797.
29. Alexander Hamilton to Peter Schermerhorn, June 26, 1797.
30. John Wallace to John Gray Blount, June 29, 1797.
31. Hugh Williamson to John Gray Blount, July 6, 1797.
32. John Gray Blount to John Sommerville, July 11, 1797.
33. John Gray and Thomas Blount to Peter Schermerhorn, July 17, 1797.
34. John Gray Blount to John Carson, July 20, 1797.
35. John Gray Blount to Willie Blount, July 21, 1797.
36. John Willis to John Gray Blount, July 22, 1797.
37. John Gray Blount to Ephraim Elsbray, July 25, 1797.
38. John Gray and Thomas Blount to Timothy Pickering, July 25, 1797.
39. Benjamin Blackledge to Robert Morris, July 27, 1797.
40. Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount, July 30, 1797.
41. John Willis to John Gray Blount, August 5, 1797.
42. John Gray Blount to John Salter, August 8, 1797.
43. John Gray Blount to Hugh Williamson, August 17, 1797.
44. John Gray Blount to Robert Morris, August 25, 1797.
45. John Willis to [Richard Blackledge], September 1, 1797.
46. J. W. Wellborn to John Gray Blount, September 2, 1797.
47. John Gray Blount to John Stockdell, September 5, 1797.
48. John Gray Blount to Robert Morris, September 8, 1797.
49. Henry Williamson to [John Gray Blount], September 12, 1797.
50. John Gray Blount to John Sommerville, September 15, 1797.
51. John Gray Blount to David Allison, September 15, 1797.
52. Thomas Blount to John Haywood, October 18, 1797.
53. Thomas Blount to John Haywood, November 5, 1797.
54. [William Blount to John Gray Blount], November 7, 1797.
55. Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount, November 24, 1797.
56. William Blount to John Gray Blount, November 28, 1797.
57. Thomas Blount to John Haywood, November 30, 1797.
58. John Wallace to John Gray Blount, December 2, 1797.
59. Thomas Blount to [John Gray Blount], December 14, 1797.

LETTERS FOR 1798

1. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, January 11, 1798.
2. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, January 18, 1798.
3. Thomas Blount to [John Gray Blount], January 25, 1798.
4. David Allison to John Gray Blount, [January 27, 1798].

5. David Allison to John Gray Blount, January 29, 1798.
6. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, February 1, 1798.
7. Anne Harvey to John Gray Blount, February 5, 1798.
8. Willie Blount to John Gray Blount, February 6, 1798.
9. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, February 8, 1798.
10. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, February 8, 1798.
11. [Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount], February 16, 1798.
12. Thomas Blount to [John Gray Blount], February 26, 1798.
13. John Sitgreaves to John Gray Blount, February 28, 1798.
14. Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount, March 8, 1798.
15. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, March 10, 1798.
16. Willie Blount to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], March 13, 1798.
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18. David Allison to John Gray Blount, [April 5, 1798].
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22. William Blount to Colonel Thomas Hart, May 18, 1798.
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28. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, June 21, 1798.
29. Jacob Blount to Susannah Harvey, June 26, 1798.
30. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, June 26, 1798.
31. Joseph Tagert to Charles Roach [copy], June 27, 1798.
32. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, June 28, 1798.
33. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], July 5, 1798.
34. Thomas Blount to John Haywood, July 8, 1798.
35. Henry J. Neill to John Gray Blount, July 16, 1798.
36. Edward Harris to John Gray Blount, July 16, 1798.
37. David Allison to [John Gray Blount], July 16, 1798.
38. David Allison to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], August 18, 1798.
39. Francis Harvey to John Gray Blount, [September 27, 1798].
40. Richard Blackledge to John G. L. Schenck, October 1, 1798.
41. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, October 12, 1798.
42. William Shannon to [Thomas Blount], October 17, 1798.
43. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, October 18, 1798.
44. John Gray Blount to Thomas Brown, October 23, 1798.
45. Robert Love to John Gray Blount, November 2, 1798.
46. William Shannon to John Gray Blount, November 5, 1798.
47. John Gray Blount to Francis Harvey, November 18, 1798.
48. William Shannon to John Gray Blount, November 19, 1798.
49. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, December 6, 1798.
50. John Strother to John Gray Blount, December 29, 1798.

LETTERS FOR 1799

1. William Pennock to John Gray Blount, January 27, 1799.
2. Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount, January 27, 1799.

3. David Archer to John Gray Blount, February 9, 1799.
4. Anne Harvey to Mrs. John Gray Blount, February 26, 1799.
5. Amos Johnston to Richard Blackledge, March 3, 1799.
6. Thomas Harvey Blount to [John Gray Blount], March 8, 1799.
7. William Blount to Colonel Thomas Hart, March 13, 1799.
8. William Mathews to John Gray and Thomas Blount [with bill of lading], March 19, 1799.
9. H. Potter to [John Gray Blount], March 25, 1799.
10. William Fisher, Jr., to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], April 8, 1799.
11. John Stanly to John Gray Blount, April 11, 1799.
12. William Farris to John Gray Blount, April 14, 1799.
13. Jonathan Price to John Gray Blount, April 14, 1799.
14. Hans Patten to John Gray Blount, April 25, 1799.
15. Joseph Caldwell to John Gray Blount, April 28, 1799.
16. Josiah Collins, Jr., to John Gray Blount, May 1, 1799.
17. William Farris to John Gray and Thomas Blount, May 2, 1799.
18. William Pennock to John Gray Blount, May 4, 1799.
19. Edward Jones to John Gray Blount, May 6, 1799.
20. William Pennock to John Gray Blount, May 11, 1799.
21. Christopher Deshon to John Gray Blount, May 14, 1799.
22. Christopher Deshon to John Gray Blount, May 20, 1799.
23. Jabes Jones to John Gray Blount, May 26, 1799.
24. William Blount to Colonel Thomas Hart, June 1, 1799.
25. William Pennock to John Gray Blount, June 2, 1799.
26. Mary Fitzgerald to John Gray and Thomas Blount, [June 3, 1799].
27. Amos Johnston to John Gray Blount, June 4, 1799.
28. John Mayo to John Gray Blount, June 4, 1799.
29. Christopher Deshon to John Gray Blount, June 11, 1799.
30. John B. Evans to John Gray and Thomas Blount, June 13, 1799.
31. Will Orr to John Gray Blount, June 15, 1799.
32. Will Orr to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], June 18, 1799.
33. William Pennock to John Gray Blount, June 23, 1799.
34. James Iredell to John Gray Blount, July 3, 1799.
35. William R. Davie to John Gray Blount, July 4, 1799.
36. William Pennock to John Gray Blount, July 7, 1799.
37. Amos Johnston to John Gray Blount, July 15, 1799.
38. Samuel Davis to John Gray Blount, July 19, 1799.
39. Grove Wright to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], July 22, 1799.
40. David Clark to John Gray Blount, July 26, 1799.
41. Edward Jones to John Gray Blount, August 2, 1799.
42. Joseph Masters to John Gray Blount, August 3, 1799.
43. John Allen to John Gray Blount, August 3, 1799.
44. Mary Fitzgerald to Charles Bargeau, August 4, 1799.
45. Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount, August 8, 1799.
46. Willie Blount to Thomas Hart, August 9, 1799.
47. Will Orr to John Gray Blount, August 9, 1799.
48. Jonathan Price to John Gray Blount, August 13, 1799.
49. Thomas Blount to John Haywood, August 17, 1799.
50. William Shannon to John Gray Blount, August 18, 1799.

51. Christopher Deshon to John Gray Blount, August 26, 1799.
52. Samuel Davis to John Gray Blount, August 31, 1799.
53. William Polk to John Gray Blount, September 14, 1799.
54. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, October 13, 1799.
55. John B. Evans to John Gray and Thomas Blount, October 21, 1799.
56. H. Potter to John Gray Blount, October 28, 1799.
57. Benjamin Atkinson to John Gray Blount, October 29, 1799.
58. Benjamin Williams to John Gray Blount, November 3, 1799.
59. Samuel Davis to John Gray Blount, November 16, 1799.
60. James Armstrong to John Gray Blount, November 18, 1799.
61. [Willie Blount] to John Gray Blount, December 2, 1799.
62. John B. Evans to John Gray and Thomas Blount [with enclosure], December 2, 1799.
63. William Blount to Colonel Thomas Hart, December 5, 1799.

LETTERS FOR 1800

1. Hans Patten to John Gray Blount, [1800?].
2. Thomas Smith to John Gray Blount, [1800?].
3. Charles Smallwood to John Gray Blount, January [n.d.], 1800.
4. John Strother to John Gray Blount, January 2, 1800.
5. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, January 6, 1800.
6. Richard Lake and Nephew to John Gray Blount, January 6, 1800.
7. Peter Casso to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], January 11, 1800.
8. Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount, January 14, 1800.
9. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, January 17, 1800.
10. Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount, January 21, 1800.
11. William Charles Lake to John Gray and Thomas Blount, January 25, 1800.
12. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, February 2, 1800.
13. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, February 15, 1800.
14. Isaac Levy to John Gray Blount, February 16, 1800.
15. Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount, February 21, 1800.
16. N. Long to John Gray Blount, February 25, 1800.
17. Spyers Singleton to John Gray Blount, February 27, 1800.
18. William Blackledge to John Gray Blount, March 5, 1800.
19. Willis Allston to John Gray Blount, March 8, 1800.
20. Willie Blount to John Gray Blount [*via* Thomas Blount], March 9, 1800.
21. Willie Blount to Thomas Blount, March 10, 1800.
22. Grove Wright to John Gray Blount, March 10, 1800.
23. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, March 13, 1800.
24. William Blackledge to John Gray Blount, March 23, 1800.
25. John Wallace to John Gray Blount, March 24, 1800.
26. John Summerville to Thomas Blount, March 27, 1800.
27. John Summerville to John Gray Blount, March 27, 1800.
28. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, March 28, 1800.
29. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], March 29, 1800.
30. Benjamin Grayson Orr to William Blount, April 2, 1800.

31. Francis Porie to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], April 3, 1800.
32. [James Winchester to John Gray Blount, copy], April 5, 1800.
33. Thomas Brown to John Gray Blount, April 14, 1800.
34. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, April 15, 1800.
35. Benjamin Grayson Orr to John Gray Blount, April 18, 1800.
36. Nathaniel Pendleton to John Gray Blount, April 22, 1800.
37. Walter Simpson to John Gray Blount, April 23, 1800.
38. Willie Blount to John Gray Blount, April 23, 1800.
39. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, April 25, 1800.
40. Henry Bettner to John Gray Blount, April 26, 1800.
41. John Sitgreaves to John Gray Blount, April 29, 1800.
42. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, May 5, 1800.
43. John Gray Blount to [Willie Blount, draft with enclosure], May 11, 1800.
44. Anne Harvey to Mrs. John Gray Blount, May 11, 1800.
45. Stephen Blount to John Gray Blount, May 16, 1800.
46. Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount, May 19, 1800.
47. John Wallace to John Gray Blount, May 22, 1800.
48. Sharpe Blount to John Gray Blount, May 25, 1800.
49. Willie Blount to Jacob Blount, May 25, 1800.
50. Willie Blount to John Gray Blount, May 26, 1800.
51. Willie Blount to John Gray and Thomas Blount, May 26, 1800.
52. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, June 5, 1800.
53. William and James Moss to John Gray Blount, June 13, 1800.
54. John Wallace to John Gray Blount, June 14, 1800.
55. John Wallace to John Gray Blount, June 30, 1800.
56. Thomas Blount to [John Gray Blount, with enclosure], July 1, 1800.
57. Thomas D. Ogden to John Gray Blount, July 3, 1800.
58. Blake Baker to John Gray Blount, July 6, 1800.
59. Thomas Harvey Blount to John Gray Blount, July 6, 1800.
60. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, July 6, 1800.
61. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, July 8, 1800.
62. Edward Forbes to John Gray and Thomas Blount [with enclosure], July 10, 1800.
63. Stephen Blount to [John Gray Blount], July 11, 1800.
64. Elijah Bell to John Gray Blount, [July 11, 1800].
65. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, July 11, 1800.
66. Thomas Harvey Blount to John Gray Blount, July 12, 1800.
67. William Charles Lake to John Gray and Thomas Blount [with enclosure], July 14, 1800.
68. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, July 15, 1800.
69. William Shannon to [John Gray Blount], July 17, 1800.
70. Isaac Levi to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], July 21, 1800.
71. Thomas Blount to John Haywood, July 31, 1800.
72. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, August 7, 1800.
73. John S. West to John Gray Blount, August 10, 1800.
74. John S. West to John Gray Blount, August 13, 1800.
75. Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount, August 16, 1800.
76. Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount, August 18, 1800.
77. Abraham Bradley, Jr., to John Gray Blount, August 22, 1800.

78. William Shannon to John Gray Blount, August 29, 1800.
79. John Salter to John Gray Blount, September 2, 1800.
80. Will Orr to John Gray Blount, September 4, 1800.
81. Will Orr to John Gray Blount, September 8, 1800.
82. John Strother to John Gray Blount, September 8, 1800.
83. William Blackledge to John Gray Blount, [September 11, 1800].
84. J. B. Borland to John Gray Blount, September 25, 1800.
85. Thomas Smith to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], September 26, 1800.
86. Abraham Bradley, Jr., to John Gray Blount [with enclosures], September 28, 1800.
87. Peter Schermerhorn to John Gray Blount, September 29, 1800.
88. Will Orr to John Gray Blount, October 4, 1800.
89. Henry Peterson to John Gray Blount, October 9, 1800.
90. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, October 11, 1800.
91. Benjamin Hodges Blunt to John Gray Blount, October 13, 1800.
92. Willie Blount to John Gray Blount, October 18, 1800.
93. Henry Selby to John Gray Blount, November 1, 1800.
94. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, November 6, 1800.
95. John Strother to John Gray Blount, November 7, 1800.
96. William Blackledge to John Gray Blount, November 7, 1800.
97. John Wallace to John Gray Blount, November 7, 1800.
98. William Wilson to John Gray Blount, November 9, 1800.
99. Pruson Bowdoin to John Gray Blount, November 10, 1800.
100. William Blackledge to John Gray Blount, November 14, 1800.
101. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, November 16, 1800.
102. John Wallace to John Gray Blount, November 20, 1800.
103. Joseph Habersham to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], November 25, 1800.
104. William Blackledge to John Gray Blount, November 25, 1800.
105. [John Strother] to John Gray Blount, November 27, 1800.
106. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, November 28, 1800.
107. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, November 29, 1800.
108. James Watson to John Gray Blount, December 8, 1800.
109. Pruson Bowdoin to John Gray Blount, December 9, 1800.
110. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], December 15, 1800.
111. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, December 18, 1800.
112. William Blackledge to John Gray Blount, December 20, 1800.
113. Sharpe Blount to John Gray Blount, December 21, 1800.
114. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, December 22, 1800.
115. Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount, December 23, 1800.
116. William Shannon to John Gray Blount, December 27, 1800.
117. Benjamin Woods to John Gray Blount, December 29, 1800.

LETTERS FOR 1801

1. William Polk to John Gray Blount, January 6, 1801.
2. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, January 13, 1801.
3. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, January 24, 1801.

4. Josiah Collins, Jr., to John Gray Blount, [January 25, 1801].
5. William Shannon to [John Gray Blount], January 27, 1801.
6. Sharpe Blount to John Gray Blount, [February, 1801].
7. John Gray Blount to Francis Harvey [copy], [February 6, 1801].
8. John Gray Blount to Thomas Brown [copy], [February 6, 1801].
9. John Strother to [John Gray Blount], March 12, 1801.
10. John Carson to John Gray Blount, [April, 1801?].
11. D. W. Mitchell to Stephen Blount, May 2, 1801.
12. John Gray Blount to Bryan Ward, May 15, 1801.
13. John Strother to [John Gray Blount], May 26, 1801.
14. John Strother to [John Gray Blount], June 1, 1801.
15. John Strother to [John Gray Blount], June 8, 1801.
16. John Strother to John Gray Blount, August 16, 1801.
17. John Strother to John Gray Blount, October 23, 1801.
18. John Strother to [John Gray Blount], October 26, 1801.
19. Peter Casso [Jr.,] to John Gray Blount, November 4, 1801.

LETTERS FOR 1802

1. Peter Conway to John Gray Blount, January 2, 1802.
2. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, January 8, 1802.
3. Peter Casso [Jr.,] to John Gray Blount, January 8, 1802.
4. Alexander Miller to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], January 10, 1802.
5. Thomas Russell to John Gray Blount, February 1, 1802.
6. Nathaniel Macon to Mr. Blount, February 2, 1802.
7. Jacob Swindell to John Gray Blount, [February 2, 1802].
8. William Shannon to [John Gray Blount], February 4, 1802.
9. David Stone to John Gray Blount, February 10, 1802.
10. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, February 15, 1802.
11. Thomas Blount to [John Gray Blount], February 22, 1802.
12. George Cameron to [John Gray Blount], February 23, 1802.
13. Jacob Rhodes to John Gray Blount, February 24, 1802.
14. Josiah Collins, Jr., to John Gray Blount, March 20, 1802.
15. Reading Blount to John Gray Blount, April, 1802.
16. William Charles Lake and Son to John Gray and Thomas Blount [with enclosure], April 22, 1802.
17. John Gaylard to John Gray Blount, April 23, 1802.
18. David Stone to John Gray Blount, May 4, 1802.
19. Joel Dickinson to John Gray Blount, May 5, 1802.
20. Elizabeth Gautier to John Gray Blount, May 19, 1802.
21. Benjamin Storey to John Gray Blount, May 22, 1802.
22. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, May 24, 1802.
23. William Blackledge to Will Orr, May 24, 1802.
24. Isaac Levi to Benjamin [John Gray] Blount [with enclosure, June 9, 1802].
25. Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount, June 10, 1802.
26. Loring and Seaver to John Gray Blount, June 17, 1802.
27. Amos Johnston to John Gray Blount, June 21, 1802.
28. William Shannon to John Gray Blount, June 23, 1802.

29. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, June 28, 1802.
30. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, July 1, 1802.
31. [John Goelet] to John Gray Blount, July 10, 1802.
32. Benjamin Smith to John Gray Blount, July 10, 1802.
33. Peter Conway to John Gray Blount, July 12, 1802.
34. Benjamin Smith to John Gray Blount, July 15, 1802.
35. John Gray Blount to Christopher Dudley [copy], July 21, 1802, and John Gray Blount to James Bradley [copy], July 22, 1802.
36. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, July 24, 1802.
37. Josiah Collins, Jr., to John Gray Blount, July 24, 1802.
38. John Little to John Gray Blount, July 24, 1802.
39. J. Delacour to John Gray Blount, July 27, 1802.
40. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, August 2, 1802.
41. Arthur Jones to John Gray Blount, August 9, 1802.
42. William Shannon to [John Gray Blount], August 16, 1802.
43. J. Gilpin to John Gray Blount, August 18, 1802.
44. Isaac Levi to B:G [John Gray] Blount [with enclosure], August 29, 1802.
45. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, August 30, 1802.
46. John Strother to [John Gray Blount], September 5, 1802.
47. Benjamin Smith to John Gray Blount, September 8, 1802.
48. Nicholas Newell to John Gray Blount, September 9, 1802.
49. Willie Blount to John Gray Blount, September 12, 1802.
50. James Moss to John Gray Blount [with enclosures], September 13, 1802.
51. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, September 28, 1802.
52. William Ross to John Gray Blount, October 4, 1802.
53. Fredrick Statt to John Gray Blount, October 15, 1802.
54. Richard Lake to Thomas Blount, October 25, 1802.
55. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, October 30, 1802.
56. John Gaylard to John Gray Blount, November 4, 1802.
57. Benjamin Smith to John Gray Blount, November 4, 1802.
58. William Shannon to John Gray Blount, November 5, 1802.
59. Seldon Jasper to John Gray Blount, November 8, 1802.
60. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, November 10, 1802.
61. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, November 15, 1802.
62. Willie Blount to John Gray Blount, November 19, 1802.
63. Henry Selby to John Gray Blount, November 20, 1802.
64. Travers and Way to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], November 23, 1802.
65. John Mayo to John Gray Blount, December 16, 1802.
66. Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount, December 18, 1802.

OTHER PAPERS FOR 1796-1802

1. Power of Attorney—Henry Williamson, February 10, 1796.
2. A List of Grants taken to Philadelphia by John Strother for David Allison, April 23, 1796.
3. William Blount—Andrew Jackson Note, June 11, 1796-July 12, 1798.

4. Draft of John Gray and Thomas Blount on Robert Smethey. August 25, 1796—September 9, 1796.
5. Blackledge Warning, September 23, 1796.
6. Strother Affidavit, October 15, 1796.
7. John Gray Blount Notebook, May 10, 1797.
8. Indenture of Abner Neale to John Gray Blount, November 24, 1797.
9. Election Circular—An Elector, [n.d.].
10. Strother—Hodge Indenture, April 27, 1798.
11. Memo of Taxes, May 1, 1798.
12. John Gray Blount—Luke Robinson Indenture, June 9, 1798.
13. Governor Ashe to the General Assembly, 1798.
14. Report of Legislative Committee Investigating Land Frauds, June 6, 1799.
15. Memorial of John Gray and Thomas Blount, December 16, 1799.
16. Newspaper Clipping, March 4, 1800.
17. Election Circular—Thomas Blount, July 25, 1800.
18. Thomas Topping Bill and Receipt, July 25, 1801.
19. Deposition of Richard Blackledge, March 1, 1802.

THE BLOUNT PAPERS

LETTERS FOR 1796

John Porterfield¹ to John Gray Blount

Fayetteville Jan^y [n.d.] 1796

Sir

A few days ago I pass'd your Note for One Thousand Dollars to a certain Tho^s. Burnside for a House & Lott[;] he gave me a Deed for the Property but not a delivery[;] directly on his receiving his pay he march'd of[f] and left the House in possession of a Woman the Widow of his Brother who Says She has a claim upon the property and will keep possession untill She is Satisfy'd—My reason for Troubling you at present is to request you not to discharge S^d note upon any terms untill you hear from you [*i.e.*, me][;] I know the fellow will endeavour to Sell it[.] Your refusing to pay Will only Cause a Suit the Expenes of Which I Will pay and attend to[;] I have Written to Georgia Where he is gone to have it advertis^d in the papers[.] I am in hopes the advertisement will appear in time to prevent him from Selling [2] Doct^r Ingram has been so importunate and made Such loud complaints on acco^t. of his not receiving his money that rather than be eternally plagu'd with him I have made out to Satesfy him but it Was by laying myself open to the Mercey of Some other Credetors but I hope it will be in your power to Send me the Money before any Evil consequences can arrise to me from so doing & I Should be glad to hear from you I have in possession and am dispos'd to Sell about 10,000 acres of Patent Land² in the Western Country if you think proper to buy I probably could point out away to make the payment easy[;] you have I believe a Statement of Governor [William] Blounts³

¹ Porterfield, member of a prominent Fayetteville family, was once a Blount land agent, and had entered a company with the Blounts and others, including his brother James, who died in 1795. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*, especially 316, 542, 557-558, 655; Willie to John Gray Blount, February 6, 1798, in this volume.

² Land bought directly from the State, to which the purchaser had clear title by the State's patent.

³ Elder brother of John Gray Blount, born in 1749. Successively a member of the North Carolina House of Commons and Senate, of the Continental Congress, and of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, he also served in the North Carolina ratification conventions. President Washington then appointed him Governor of the Territory South of the River Ohio (later Tennessee) and Southern Indian Superintendent. In 1796 he was elected a United States Senator for the new State of Tennessee. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xviii-xxi, and Masterson, *William Blount*.

Accot. if you are Satisfyd with it and can Make it convenient I would thank you to Settle it—I have the Honour to be with Every sentiment of respect your most obed^t.

Humble Ser^t John Porterfield

Addressed: John Gray Blount esq^r
Merchant in
Washington

David Allison⁴ to John Gray Blount

Phil^a. Jan^y. 7th 1796

Dear Sir

I am this moment returned from Mr. Hazlehurst on the subject of the debt to Crugor[;]⁵ it now stands clearly defined that the paper must be payable to H Crugor or Order[;] of this kind I could not tender him as I had not a dollar payable to any one except John Nicholson⁶ or myself — he will not take their joint paper, I am therefore Obligated to get it in his own way to do which I have time, but fear Mr. Morris⁷ will not give it, as he is obstinate from so much harassing as he has met with — I will try him in the morning thro Mr N[icholson] and make the payment by some means or other in a day or two — You need have no apprehensions on account of the Bond, no advantage can be had from it, the Paper is all he can get at any [2] period before three Years — Money is scarce here and but little prospect of it being plentier during this Winter, I am using every exertion to

⁴ A Philadelphia land speculator whose dealings with the Blounts constitute their principal land operations in this period. See the Introduction to this volume.

⁵ "Hazelhurst . . . Crugor." Allison was negotiating a large land sale to Robert Morris and his business associate Isaac Hazelhurst. They were to pay for the land by assuming a Blount debt (bond) to Henry Crugor, a merchant of Bristol, England, who had begun operations with North Carolina merchants in 1783. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 110; David Allison to Blount, February 18, 1796; and Thomas to John Gray Blount, February 16, March 29, 1798, in this volume.

⁶ Nicholson (d. 1800) was Comptroller General of Pennsylvania from 1782 until 1794. A financial wizard of great personal wealth, he joined his close friend Robert Morris in land speculation during the 1790's, including participation in the North American Land Company. Following the speculative collapse of the late 1790's, Nicholson was imprisoned in 1800 for debts totalling \$4,000,000 and died after a four month confinement. Allen Johnson, Dumas Malone, and Others (eds.), *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 22 volumes and index, 1928), XIII, 504-505, hereinafter cited as *Dictionary of American Biography*.

⁷ Robert Morris (1734-1806), the famous financier of the Revolution and partner in the firm of Willing, Morris and Company. Morris's mania for land speculation began during his Senate term, 1789-1795, and in the North American Land Company and elsewhere his interests amounted to millions of acres. He failed spectacularly, was imprisoned in 1798, and was released under the Federal bankruptcy law in 1801. *Dictionary of American Biography*, XIII, 219-223; David Allison to Blount, February 18, 1796; and Thomas to John Gray Blount, February 1, June 28, 1798, in this volume.

effect a sale for cash even on very low terms to raise funds — in this I fared badly — What has become of Sexton⁸ — has or can he do any thing—I counted that you would have received aid from his first payment long ago — I cant do any thing with the Judge⁹ for want of lands to complete [the contract] — a sale of a Small quantity must be had for raising Cash to compleat¹⁰ the others—

By Major Carson¹¹ I sent you a schedule of the lands——* in the Territory,¹² they are yet considerable[;] for this [reason?]* I have urged Mr. Blount not to sell those on the [C]aney Fork at the price you proposed until some other experiments are made. I have this day rec^d. four ——* from Mr Blackledge¹³ at Wilmington and information that the Business is actually closed with [3] Gen^l Smith¹⁴ — I hope in a few days to effect the Sale to the Judge @† One dollar—when are the Buncombe Lands to come forward and how much money & Certificates are Wanting

⁸ Isaac Sexton, a land speculator. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 579.

⁹ James Wilson (1742-1798), a Scottish-born jurist and compulsive land speculator who came to America in 1765, was active in the Revolution, and served with distinction in the Constitutional Convention of 1787. He became a Justice of the United States Supreme Court (1789-1798), but his legal talents were overshadowed by a passion for speculation that clouded his reputation and probably caused his death. He was active in the Holland Land Company and was a member of one of the notorious Yazoo companies. He was deeply involved with Robert Morris, with whom he bought hundreds of thousands of acres from David Allison. In 1797 he moved to New Jersey to avoid arrest for debt, and later sought refuge with Judge James Iredell in Edenton, North Carolina, where he lost his reason and soon after died. *Dictionary of American Biography*, XX, 326-330; Thomas to John Gray Blount, February 16, 26, 1798; and Jacob to John Gray Blount, March 8, 1798, in this volume.

¹⁰ "Complete" is used here in two senses. Allison had contracted to sell Wilson vast quantities of land, but did not have clear title to sufficient quantities to complete the contract. He therefore proposes to sell small quantities of land for cash to someone else, and to use this money as a final payment to complete the titles for Wilson. See Thomas Blount to John Haywood, April 1, 1796, in this volume.

¹¹ John Carson, who lived at Pleasant Gardens (now McDowell), Burke County, was an agent for John Gray Blount. He served in the House of Commons in 1805 and 1806, but his activities at this time seem to have centered about land speculation. His brother-in-law, Joseph McDowell, was a political foe of William Blount. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 561-562, 656-657, 661-663; John Carson to Blount, January 24, 1797; and Mary Ragsdale to Blount, January 24, 1797, in this volume; John Hill Wheeler, *Historical Sketches of North Carolina from 1584 to 1851* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and Company, 2 volumes in 1, 1851), II, 62, hereinafter cited as Wheeler, *Sketches*; Masterson, *William Blount*, 154, 167, 168, 331; Clarence W. Griffin, *Western North Carolina Sketches* (Forest City: *The Forest City Courier*, 1941), 46.

* Manuscript obscured by repair.

¹² Territory South of the River Ohio, of which William Blount was Governor, later the State of Tennessee.

¹³ Richard Blackledge, son of the Richard Blackledge with whom the senior Jacob Blount, father of John Gray, formed a mercantile business on the site of Washington in 1761. The Blount and Blackledge families continued their personal and business relationships, and the Richard Blackledge of this letter married Louisa, John Gray Blount's sister. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*.

¹⁴ Benjamin Smith of Brunswick County, a general of the militia. Smith, who lived at Belvedere, four miles west of Wilmington on the Brunswick River, served in the State Senate from 1792 through 1800 and from 1804 to 1810, and was elected governor in 1810. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 49-50; Blackwell P. Robinson (ed.), *The North Carolina Guide* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1955), 264-265, hereinafter cited as Robinson, *North Carolina Guide*. He was a large-scale land speculator from whom Blount had purchased 60,000 acres. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 316-317, 600, *n.1*, 603, 611. For the transaction mentioned in this letter, see David Allison to Blount, March 3, 1796, in this volume.

† The symbol @ is used frequently in these letters to represent the words "to" and "at."

to complete the whole & the longest period to produce it in —
No news from the Westward¹⁵ *except as usual*

I am D^r Sir

Your Obedient Servant

David Allison

Addressed: [John Gra] *y Blount Esq^r.

Tarborough

N^o. Carolina

Gaeb. Jordan to John Gray Blount

[January 8, 1796]

Sir

I have for Sail three Hundred Acres of Land lying in the County of Hyde — two hundred of which is well timberd with pine veary convenient to the Water and Road — the other Hundred is veary good Swap [swamp] land well timberd with white and Red oak and may be draind, with Ease —

Should you have a wish to become a purchaser — You can have it on Reasonable terms — as I intend Removing from this to Cumberland consequently wish to Sell before I go from this

I am Sir your Hub Ser^t

Gaeb. Jordan

January 8, 1796

N B

be so kind as to write
me Respecting the Same by
the first oportunity

G.J.

Addressed: John G Blount Esq^r

Washington

Hn^d. p^r

Capt. Alderson

¹⁵ "From the Westward," i.e., from William Blount.

* Manuscript torn.

*Benjamin Atkinson¹⁶ to John Gray Blount*Bensborough [Pitt County] Jan^y 9th 1796

Mr John G Blount

Dear Sir Your Esteemed by the Post came same to hand & young Scarborough has come up & I have paid him the Balance of the freight for the Oats &^c which please to send up by my flatt.

I have sent down Two Hundred & fifty five Bushels of Peas for you[;] please to credit me with the same @ 8/ as we agreed—

I gave Scarborough an order to Stephen Owens for 100 bb^s Tar to take down in his Vessel from Greenville but do not know that it is Ready —

Should he not have taken it Please to deliver him Pitch for his load, and consign him unto Warren Ashley[,]¹⁷ Norfolk I will advance 600 \$ to Mr Jasper¹⁸ Provided that he will engage to Take freight to Europe at 10/ but with this Reserve in Case a peace should be concluded between France & England before the Vessel Sails he Shall take such fr[e]ight [2] as then becomes customary from the United States to the Port he is consigned to — or any Accident happen to him so that his Vessel is not able to reach the Port She is consigned to, he must give me Suficient Insurance for the Recovery of my money with Int^t from the date of the payment, but am dubious if he says she will be ready in June it m[a]y be Aug^t before she gets away. You know the Summer Season is Dreadfull bad for to keep tar I should wish if it were Possible for her to sail in the month of April, & provided I was to get her Should want one of yours also or perhaps you may hear of some other that may be had. I wish you to miss no opp^y in sending the Balance of the Naval Stores round to Norfolk as soon as Possible lest the Price Should get down.

I have not yet had time to Pickle a Barrel of my Pork and of course send nothing to Jamaica and from the Prices at Kingston the midle of Nov^r it is hardly worth while. Balantine Fairlie & C^o¹⁹[s prices were] [3]

Say Ships Pork 140/ — @ 170/ —
Cargo 120/ .. 130/

¹⁶ A Bensborough merchant who bought in large quantities from the Blounts and often leased their ships for voyages to northern ports, the West Indies, and Europe. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 18, n.52.

¹⁷ A prominent Virginia merchant. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 264-265, 601, 624.

¹⁸ James Jasper of Hyde County was a merchant, planter, and shipowner, who represented Hyde County in the General Assembly from 1790 to 1795. His son or nephew acted as a ship captain. Benjamin Atkinson to Blount, March 21, 1796, in this volume; compare Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 213 and various House Journals.

¹⁹ A firm in Kingston, Jamaica.

Lard 15^d . . .
 Tob^o 50/P 100 ^{1b}
 Tar 40/ Turp^t 40/
 Pitch 80/ Rosin 80/
 Board Plank & Scantling £15
 22 In^c Shingles 80/ — 18 d^o 60/ —
 Red oak H H^d Staves & heading £20
 and rising

And if this was the Price of Pork then I suppose it has not risen much & to give 2 Doll^s pr & 2 Doll^s Comissions & the Insurance would be as well to Sell at home

I am Truly Dear Sir

with much Regard

Your Most ob^t H^{bl} Ser^t

Ben Atkinson

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r
 Merch^t
 Washington

Richard and James Potter²⁰ to John Gray Blount

[Philadelphia, January 10, 1796]

Mr J. G Blount

Sir

Relying on the introduction of our mutual friend W. P. Farrell, we claim your friendship and assistance to extricate us from a very unpleasant and unprofitable Situation — could we entertain an opinion for one moment that the most inveterate enemy we have could affix any censure upon us, in this business, we are very confident the Papers Cap^t. Meminger²¹ will lay before you would remove the whole — the letter Mr. Taggart so hastily wrote, was indelicate, and unjustifiable, and must have been dictated by some former animosity to our house.

²⁰ Wholesale dealers in dry goods, John Gray and Thomas Blount Letter Book, New-York Historical Society, New York City, *passim*, hereinafter cited as Letter Book. The subject of this letter is the brig "Betsy," owned by the Potters and impounded in New Bern pending suits by the sailors and captain. See Lewis Meminger to Blount, February 11, 1796; F. X. Martin to Blount, February 11, 17, 1796; Richard and James Potter to Blount, March 3, 1796; and Thomas Turner to Blount, February 17, 1796, in this volume.

²¹ Lewis Meminger, a Blount ship captain. See Meminger to Blount, February 11, 1796, in this volume.

Capt. Meminger will take the command of the Brigg and should you see no reason to remove the mate & crew now in her we should wish to have them continued

[2] Tho owners of Six Vessells in the West Indie Trade we confess ourselves at a loss to plan the present Voyage as we do not anticipate much profit, but wish her to be dispos^d of in the Faire[st]* way, to insure [which], under these circumstances, which you will clearly & soon enter into, we must rely entirely upon your friendship and exertion, assuring you we shall be fully satisfied with what you [do], and shall acce^ept any d[ra]ft you may value [*i.e.*, draw] up us, and at what time you please

We have only to observe to you our wish that dispatch may be used & should you see any reason to alter her Voyage, you have our permission to do it

Philadelp^a.

Jany 10 96

We are

Sir

Your mo ob serv.

R^d. & Jas Potter

Addressed: J. G. Blount Esqr
Washington

J. W. G. Prescott ²² to John Gray Blount

Kingston [Jamaica] January 19th. 1796

Sir

I arived here on the 10th. and from the Dilatoriness of everyone I have had to deal with did not get discharged untill the Day before yesterday. whether it be from fear of irritating the negroes or from custom formerly establishd, I know not, but their negroes work but from eight o'clock in the morning till 2 o'clock¹. and then no more that day which kept me 5 days discharging my pease. they sold at 10/ pork £7. Shingles unsold. Mullets £3. — produce is here at an Enormous price owing to Military Law²³ and late Acco^{ts}. from Europe

* Manuscript torn.

²² A trusted supercargo and ship captain of the Blount firm. Letter Book, *passim*.

²³ Martial law was declared in 1795 in Jamaica upon the threat of an uprising of the Maroons, descendants of escaped Negro slaves who took Choco Indian women as wives. The uprising took place and was suppressed as Prescott describes. Alan Cuthbert Burns, *History of the British West Indies* (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1954), 554, hereinafter cited as Burns, *History of the British West Indies*.

So many Americans here I find it difficult indeed to procure as much ballast as will put the Schooner in a good Set of Ballast for beating on the Coast.²⁴ I am promised a Sufficiency by two men and if I get it from either tomorrow shall certainly Sail the next day.

I am much mortified at being detained so long which has not been owing to want of Exertions on the part of myself or the Crew. —

I calld in at Cape Nicola²⁵ but could not get [within] your [price] Limits & even what was offered me was to the king to be paid in drafts on Government here.²⁶ which I did not think proper to accept. —

Cap^t. [Thomas] Smith²⁷ has not arrived. I suppose he has stoppd at the Mole. where I believe his Stock will Sell to advantage.

All our Spare and lost time during our discharging I kept the People to painting and putting the Regulator in as Shewy a State [2] as possible and as soon as discharged hauld off in the Stream. some Spainiards have been to See her but they complain of the Size. — Cap^t. West of Newbern has been offerd 5000 Doll^s. for his Boat of 83 Tons. by him this Letter goes via Norfolk where he carries a freight for 500 D^{rs}.

Please inform Cap^t. Cameron his Sloop Cap^t. Tucker is yet here. he has been endeavouring with Several other Vessells these last 5 Days to get to Rock fork, distant only 6 miles to take in ballast and has not as yet got up owing to the Seabreeze blowing continually day & night very fresh during that time. — Which makes me prefer taking my ballast here if possible even at something more advance. — Tuckers lumber was very bad and I believe will not more than pay freight. —

Cap^t. Webster is here also on his way up to ballast. —

An American Brig has been taken by a republican privateer and carried into St. Iago [Santiago] de Cuba. under pretence of having Brittish property onboard²⁸ when the Cargoe has

²⁴ Tacking into the wind along the coast.

²⁵ Cape Moole St. Nicolas on the northwestern tip of Hispaniola, in the part then occupied by British forces. Howell Joseph Ragatz, *The Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean, 1763-1833* (New York: Century Company, 1928), 217, 228-229, 237, hereinafter cited as Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class*.

²⁶ I.e., bills drawn on the British treasury but payable by the local government of Jamaica, whose credit was embarrassed by the Maroon insurrection. J. Holland Rose, "The Conflict with Revolutionary France, 1793-1802," in *The Cambridge History of the British Empire* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 8 volumes, 1940), II, 51.

²⁷ A ship captain for the Blount firm. Blount to Smith, June 25, 1796, in this volume.

²⁸ The increasing incidence of such violations of neutral rights by French privateers led to the quasi-war with France in 1797. Gardner W. Allen, *Our Naval War with France* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1909), hereinafter cited as Allen, *Naval War*.

been discharged on shore and the Vessel as yet detained by the Spanish Government to the Use of the Capturer. the Cap^t. arrived here this morning and Says there were Seven Sails of French privateers Cruising from there that Stop and pillage every thing. —

A Gazette extraording is today published by Government informing of the Surrender of 400 of the maroons to the Governor which it is Supposed will put an end to that war. they were intimidated it is said into this measure by the dread of about 200 Dogs (Bloodhounds) attended by 70 Spaniards which were about to be [3] let loose into the woods upon them where all the Troops of the island could not penetrate. the importation of these extraordinary Auxiliaries have cost the Government 10,000—Dollars.—

I am. Sir

Y^r. Obed. Serv^t.

J W G Prescott

Rum 6/3 a 6/0
 Sugar 80/
 Coffee 120/
 Molasses 2/6 a 3/
 Pork £7—
 Beef 93/4
 flour £5—
 Boards & Sctantling £ 15.—
 Shingles in no demand

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
 Washington
 North Carolina

David Allison to John Gray Blount

[Philadelphia] January 21st. 1796

Dear Sir

Your letter of the 6th. is only to hand this day with others from the State of a much later date — this observation may probably account for your receiving no letters from Col^o [Thomas] Blount²⁹ or myself both of us has written for three posts pre-

²⁹ Thomas Blount (1759-1812) was the fourth son of Jacob and Barbara Gray Blount. At sixteen he entered the Revolutionary Army and rose to the rank of major general in the North Carolina militia. He was a more or less silent partner in the firm of John Gray and Thomas Blount, as his tastes were political rather than mercantile. For a fuller sketch of this human and volatile Blount, see Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xii-xxvii, *passim*; Introduction above; and Masterson, *William Blount*, *passim*.

vicious to this, and to day we are informed that a great part of the mails heretofore sent Southwardly remains at Harris's on Nottaway³⁰ where I suppose our letters also lie for we directed them to you by way of Tarborough—I am sorry that much Trouble and expence became necessary to compleat the bargain with Smith however I hope we shall not repent either. I have offered it to the Judge³¹ as the property of a Mr. Williams at 7/6 Pen. [Pennsylvania money] per acre payable in twelve and eighteen months which at even the present low *ebb* of paper will be equal to 30 Cents Cash — I am now urging a Sale to the Eastward and every place where it is probable any thing can be effected to raise funds for payment of debts and providing for the completion of the Lands which I most anxiously wish in the Judges [hands] that Interest may commence and that you may be freed from embarrassments which I find you cant [2] bear up against, I confess they are difficult things even here for if there can be a Hell on Earth I have surely fixed on the Spot, *this to yourself* for I am above growling when I cant do better.

Mr Blackledge has written me that he has closed the Montgomery business and on his way to Brunswick from Raleigh on the 11th he also gives me a Copy of B Smiths Contract from Avery's borough³² last Post — You say Mr Strother³³ is making a survey of Brunswick[.] as you appear to be doing this in all the Counties I suppose to aid the Map of the State cant all our lands be laid down on this Map and a rough draft of each County sent me.

I have long had deeds prepared for the lands in your name but cant get an opportunity to send them forward—I believe no

³⁰ Harris's was a United States Post Office in Brunswick County, Virginia. The Nottaway River forms the northern boundary of Brunswick County. Mail came to Richmond, then south to Harris's, from thence to Halifax, Tarboro, and Washington. *List of Post Offices in the United States* . . . (Washington, D. C., 1803), 17.

³¹ Judge James Wilson. David Allison to Blount, January 7, 1796, in this volume.

³² Averysborough, in Cumberland County on the Cape Fear River north of Fayetteville. Richard Blackledge was travelling as Allison's (and Blount's) land agent. See Blackledge deposition, March 1, 1802 in "Other Papers for 1796-1802," in this volume. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, map opposite 64.

³³ John Strother of Orange County was a long-time associate of the Blounts who served as their land agent and surveyor. A competent cartographer, he worked with Jonathan Price preparing surveys and maps, first of coastal North Carolina and then of the entire State. He served on Jackson's Natchez expedition in 1812, but was later dismissed from the service. In 1810 he became John Gray Blount's sole agent for the disposal of Blount's remaining Tennessee lands and served in this capacity until his death on August 19, 1815, which occurred while he was acting as surveyor to the commission running the line for the Treaty of Fort Jackson with the Creek Indians. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*; John S. Bassett and J. F. Jameson (eds.), *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 7 volumes, 1926-1935), I, 232, 247; II, 33, hereinafter cited as Bassett, *Correspondence of Jackson*; John Gray Blount, Jr. to John Gray Blount, December 4, 1810; Willie to John Gray Blount, October 26, 1814; and Robert Love to Blount, October 4, 1815, all in the John Gray Blount Papers, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina, hereinafter cited as the John Gray Blount Papers.

difficulty will arise as to the Conveyance if the quantity holds good which I expect will.

I am sorry you express your Fears of landmen loosing their *Credit* and altho they all Ebb and Flow yet I find every Ebb occasions a greater flood than the succeeding[i.e. preceding] one, this would give hopes to a man of Fortitude—I will give you one instance, I was hard dunned here and promised a suit, the promise realized — in due time *when ready* I paid the money, two days after I could hardly prevent the same men from paying from 6 to 10^m \$ dollars [*sic*] for me altho I told them positively I would not pay it when due but as soon as I could[;] in this you see my credit rises by adversity and in my belief, he who is out of debt [3] is out of Credit and yet I would willingly part with the one to be clear of the other—altho our Conduct of borrowing from one fund, to discharge debts payable from another, is not perfectly consistent with Congressional Ideas yet I believe the Ex Secretary has clearly proved that it is not only *Justifiable* and *legal* but *highly proper to overdraw*, at certain seasons and for certain special causes, *the sums appropriated* to that period,³⁴ which will fully cover our case

The Judge denies that he is the purchaser under Sexton; his Credit is equal to other large land men perhaps a little better and altho he should be purchaser, I hope, if you can hold out a little time, we shall yet do well[.] I will make a sale somewhere or somehow for Cash or go to the Wall.

You say I am indebted to you[r] information as to Thomas['] [4] journey all this was given in Nov.^r last with the plan and views thereto belonging and sent you by Major Carson to be delivered at Raleigh which I expected he would have done.

I am with sentiments of great respect
Your Obedient Servant
David Allison

Addressed: John Gray Blount esquire
Washington
North Carolina

³⁴ The reference is to Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton's practice of applying funds appropriated by Congress for one purpose to another purpose. The Jeffersonians attacked him in Congress for this and never forgot it. John B. McMaster, *A History of the People of the United States from the Revolution to the Civil War* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 8 volumes, 1883-1913), II, 116-117, hereinafter cited as McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*; Leonard White, *The Federalists* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1948), 326-334.

Abner Neale³⁵ to John Gray Blount

New bern February 5.th 1796.—

Dear Sir/.

The Scarcity of Irish potatoes is so great at this place that there is not one Bushell to be had, have sent Acchilles to you to send me as many as he can bring in the Cart & with a Letter to M.^r Blackledge, informing him that some of my property must be sold previous to the Sup.^r Court to pay an Execution which Edward Tinker has against him and myself [as] *Security*; it was this day levied and of course must be Sold[.] if the Money is not paid I believe the Judgment and costs will amount to about £160. or thereabouts: pray request him to come forward and pay it off as the Idea of my property being Advertized will injure me much: — I have rented out my Plantation at 100 dollars p^r/ year for one year and the Old Plantation I expect to get 60 Doll.^s p year for and am now determin'd to remove from this place as Milley³⁶ is desirious of being near her relations; if there is a possibility of getting a House that you think will answer for my Family M.^{rs} Neale and the Children &^c will be able to remove by the 25.th March and as I have an offer for my House will keep the Office untill after the April Court. that is I can rent it well, but would prefer selling. and will if possible; my business here will detain me some time after M.^{rs} Neale leaves this thats to say one month, at least.

I find that living in this place and in the [2] manner that I have for some time done must inevitably ruin me, and now think (perhaps too late) that the Scene ought to be altered but I hope with my Industry to yet be able to provide for my small Family provided I can once get clear of this place, which I feel myself determend on. Your Answer on this subject fully will be of Satisfaction to me as, on you I place great confidence. I am
 _____* Sir

Respects to Sister Polly and Family Your &^c
 Abner Neale

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq.^r
 Washington.

³⁵ Abner, son of Christopher Neale, was a merchant, plantation owner, and minor politician of New Bern. Never vastly successful in any of his undertakings, he often turned to John Gray Blount for help and advice. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I and II, *passim*, and his letters to Blount of March 31 and April 27, 1796, in this volume. He completed his proposed move to Washington later in the year. Abner Neale to Blount, March 31, 1796, in this volume.

³⁶ Mildred Neale, Abner's wife, who after his death married the Blount correspondent Benjamin Coakley. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 339, n.69.

* Illegible abbreviation

*David Allison to [John Gray Blount]*Phil.^a Feb.^y 5.th 1796

Dear Sir

I have nothing to say at present as to complain of my situation will not better it, but believe me money is very scarce here and I cant effect a sale from which any thing can be had in hand which is the only object now of selling — You ask me about the Judge — He is like other land Speculators not in funds at present but I have no doubt that he will be finally good—Your several Bills are taken up and will be [paid] to day with much difficulty — You frequently mention your bond to Crugor — that being drawn payable to Crugor alone by Morris has prevented it being taken up for M^r Hazlehurst will receive no other and I cant get [2] Morris to alter any, it now remains in that situation but expect in a day or two to sell him as much land as will obtain this paper of which I will write you by next post

I am

Your Ob^t Servant

David Allison

*Lewis Meminger to John Gray Blount*New Bern 11.th Feb.^y 1796

Sir

This day I had a meeting with the Sailors of the Betsy who have a libel against her,³⁷ & A M^r Coffin who has An Action of Bottomry³⁸ against the Vessell which is to the Amo.^t total of nearly 900 hundred dollars[.] I rather think from Circumstances that there is some fraud in the Affair, and could not think of coming to a Settlement without your advice, the Trial of the Brig comes on the 24th of this Month at Hallifax, If I should not be encrouching upon you I would wish you could make it convenient to come to Newbern as their may be [practiced] on me who never was engaged in any business of the kind some knav-

³⁷ See Richard and James Potter to Blount, January 10, 1796; F. X. Martin to Blount, February 11, 1796; and Blount to Woods, February 18, 1796, in this volume.

³⁸ A suit to collect a debt for which a ship's hull is collateral. Coffin was the ship's captain engaged by the owners, Richard and James Potter.

ery in the Affair. I have seen Mr Wood ³⁹ [2] who I am convinced, is better able to Judge what is right, he advises me to Write to you immediately & has promissed me that he would lay a Statement of the affair before you by this post, by which you will better be able to Judge whether your presence will be necessary

With Respect I am

Y.^r Hb^{le} sv.^t

Lewis Meminger

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq.^r
Washington

François Xavier Martin⁴⁰ to John Gray Blount

Newbern Feb.^y 11.th 1796—

Sir:

I attended this day at noon in M.^r Neale's Office, a gentleman whom I am told is recommended to him by you. I made my appearance there on the behalf of the sailors of the Brig Betsy who have libelled for their wages & one Capt. Coffin who has done so for a sum he claims on a bottomree [bottomry] bond & some damage he thinks himself entitled to for non performance of a bill of lading contract.

I had been induced to believe the gentleman came there to *Settle* with the hands & Cap^t Coffin — but he came attended by two Lawyers & I understood he had neither the means or inclination to pay. — As I found my entering into a parley with him could be of no use to any of those I represented I declined entering into the business—

Mr Turner⁴¹ came there, but said he would neither pay nor make himself answerable for the payment of any money.

I understand it is *your* wish to have the vessel cleared from her present intanglem^t amicably. The Cap.^t & Sailors are willing

³⁹ Benjamin Woods, a merchant and lawyer who often represented the Blounts and was later United States District Attorney for North Carolina. He died at Edenton, April 15, 1808. Woods to Blount, December 29, 1800, in this volume. *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, April 28, 1808.

⁴⁰ Martin (1762-1846) emigrated from France to North Carolina in 1782. He read law while working for and later editing the *North Carolina Gazette*, then left the paper to become a federal judge in the Territory of Orleans in 1810. When Louisiana became a State he was its first attorney general. He was later appointed to the Supreme Court of Louisiana and subsequently became chief justice. *Dictionary of American Biography*, XII, 335-336. In this letter he represented the sailors in the legal action described here and in Richard and James Potter to Blount, January 10, 1796, and Lewis Meminger to Blount, February 11, 1796, in this volume.

⁴¹ For Thomas Turner see Turner to Blount, February 17, 1796, in this volume.

it should be so & I have no great desire to go to Halifax If I can earn the same fee in Newbern

Cap^t Coffin claimes 230 odd dolls [2] on his bottomry bond & some Compensation for unloading & reshipping 440 odd barrels of naval Stores, & being delayed from a market. The question of this compensation he is willing to Submit to a Court or to a Couple of men of Mercantile Knowledge.

The sailors claim their wage ab^t 400 dollars more or less.—

Lest my declining to enter into the matter this morning might appear like chicanery I communicate you my claim[.] I did not like to do so to the gentleman this morning —

If Cap Coffin is secured in the repay.^t of his money in a reasonable time I dare say I'll prevail on him to dismiss the libel

I'm your mo obed Serv

F. X. Martin

Addressed: Mr G Blount Esq.
Washington

David Allison to [John Gray Blount]

Philadelphia Feby. 13.th 1796.

Sir

In answer to your letter of the 13.th Ult.^o to W. Blount directing the sales of lands to relieve you from the Dunns of several People and that he must sell if I could not furnish the necessary — to this I can easily answer that lands will not command Cash at near or even half the price you suppose to wit one quarter of a dollar nor I believe at half that, in short they will only command money by selling on Credit for paper, exchanging that paper at a discount for Goods, and putting them under the Hammer at a loss of about 33 1/3 [.] thus between all those means but little can be expected from this way of raising money either as to quantity or time and as to myself at present no man is poorer⁴² yet I am endeavouring to help you, I have now on hand a negociation intended to complete if possible all North

⁴² Allison, an inveterate gambler, was badly over-extended financially in 1796 both on his own account and through speculation with others such as the Blounts. His total bankruptcy occurred in 1797. James Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 3 volumes, 1887-1888), I, 243; Bassett, *Correspondence of Jackson*, I, 16.

Carolina Speculations, with the Treasury,⁴³ and refund you the monies advanced on land business and when completed I shall have much more ease knowing then that no person is bound for any of my debts nor embarrassed thro' my persuasion, what the Event of all this trouble and anxiety to my friends as well as myself may be, is yet uncertain, but I flatter myself that it will be such as to free me from future reproach — the amount of the negociation will I hope yield about 25,000 £ in Certificates and 10^m dollars in Cash — to enable me to [2] ascertain the sum which may be wanting and p[u]rchase it if possible, will you please make a Statement of the whole Entries made and their different prices as well as the fees of Entry Takers Surveyors Chain Carriers &c &c. including in this 50^m acres purchased of Mark Mitchel and Tho^s Davidson in Buncombe County also that bought of Carson to wit 444000 (The State Tax of both these Entries are yet to pay), and also the several Sums of Money and Certificates advanced for me from time to time as well as every expense incident to the Business from [the?]* Origin, for by the God of War I must get out of debt as soon as I can, I am no longer able to bear up under the burden of trouble and fatigue which is heaped on me as well as Curses and murmurings the latter of which to me is much the severest but all these things tend to reduce my spirit to a proper degree of Patience [the?]* Mistress of all happiness — Having effected this discharge, my debts here [lying?]* under my Eye I can manage them with more ease and reduce them by degrees

I have also some other arrangements from which it is possible I may receive some small aid for this place and the Territory where many demands [are?]* against me.

please send me the Statement as early as possible.

I am

Your Obedient Servant
David Allison

⁴³ The reference is probably to the Blounts' use of State funds for speculation. John Haywood, State Treasurer from 1787 to 1827, was a close friend of the Blounts and an accomplice in manipulation of State funds and records. During his tenure he was accused of being too generous with his friends by lending State funds for private speculation and by giving credit for unpaid taxes. On his death in 1827 an audit disclosed a large financial shortage. William K. Boyd, *The Federal Period, 1783-1860*, Volume II of *History of North Carolina* by R. D. W. Connor, William K. Boyd, J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton, and others (Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 6 volumes, 1919), 112-113; Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, II, *passim*, especially II, 599, n.84; David Allison to John Haywood, April 1, 1796; and William Blount to John Haywood, May 28, 1796, in this volume.

* Manuscript obscured by repair.

*John Gray Blount to William Pennock*⁴⁴

Washington Feb^y 17th 179⁶

D Sir⁴⁵

Having speculated largely in Lands and be[ing]* in much want of Cash to answer my business in _____* way, I sold to a M.^r Isaac Sexton whose backe[rs] assured me there was no doubt of 100,000 acres at a low [2] price to secure as I thought Cash in time to answer my purposes, however in that I was disappointed and much injured and at last Sexton died without making any payment and those who I was led to expect were concern^d and would pay have refused[.] at which I am well pleased as I have answered my purposes without that money and the lands are really worth more money, but my necessities were then pressing _____

By the Contract I am not bound to convey the Land now even if they were ready to pay, but thought it right to give them an offer of them which they have delayed to accept by not paying, and I am led to expect that M.^{rs} Sexton will cancel the contract which removes all dispute, have therefore enclosed you his to me of which please inform Major Lindsay your collector and M.^{rs} Sexton that they may in your presence cancel the Contracts, and then please send me one of them or if they [re]* fuse to cancel them please return the one now sent [by]* next Post

please excuse this trouble, [be particular in _____ding]† to the directions and believe me with much esteem

Your Most Ob.^t

John G Blount

[3] I shall be much obliged by your informing M.^r Tho.^s Blount in Congress whether they cancel the agreement as soon as you know their determination

M.^r W.^m Pennock

J G Blount

⁴⁴ Pennock was a member of the Richmond and Norfolk mercantile firm of Pennock, Nicolson and Skipwith. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 320.

⁴⁵ From the Letter Book.

* Manuscript torn.

† Partly illegible.

Thomas Turner⁴⁶ to John Gray Blount

New Bern 17th Feb. 1796

Dear Sir

I am favoured with your Letter of two days ago on the subject of Brig. Betsey⁴⁷ —

I am quite willing to act & become one of those who may replevy⁴⁸ that Vessel, provided I have no need to advance Money, which would be inconvenient — A Cargo of Lumber if that be an object may be procured perhaps without Cash, but advance to seamen & other outfits will require short payment and must amount to something considerable and I cannot learn that any thing has been brought on for that purpose —

Cap.ⁿ Meminger M.^r Blackledge tells me is gone on to see you — therefore possibly you may from him gather further information on this business I am with real respect

& regard

Sir

Your humble Servant

Tho. Turner

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr
Washington

*François Xavier Martin to John Gray Blount*Newbern, February 17.th 1796—D^r Sir,

I rec^d last night the letter w^h you did me the favor of writing to me the day before Yesterday —

I'm willing to take my opinion of Mess^r Potter's⁴⁹ Conduct from yours — It matters not to me whether they shared in Os-

⁴⁶ The owner of a sizable plantation in Craven County, Turner was also active in mercantile matters. "Census 1790," in Walter Clark (ed.), *The State Records of North Carolina* (Winston, Goldsboro, and Raleigh: State of North Carolina, 16 volumes and 4-volume index, [compiled by Stephen B. Weeks for both *Colonial Records* and *State Records*], 1895-1914), XXVI, 414, hereinafter cited as Clark, *State Records*.

⁴⁷ See Richard and James Potter to Blount, January 10, 1796, n.20, in this volume.

⁴⁸ To recover, by legal writ of replevin, an object that has been impounded pending action on a suit against its owners or operators. Henry Campbell Black, *Black's Law Dictionary* (St. Paul: West Publishing Company [4th edition], 1951), 1463-1464, hereinafter cited as *Black's Law Dictionary*.

⁴⁹ For this affair of the "Betsy," see Richard and James Potter to Blount, January 10, 1796, n.20; Lewis Meminger to Blount, February 11, 1796; and Blount to Benjamin Woods, February 18, 1796, in this volume.

mond's or the Captain's guilt — Was I sure they did Still I would say "Let the Devil have his due".

Capt Miminger being from Town I cannot know from him or any one else what are your Offers — but if they be such as your observations or Cap.^t Coffin's claim pr[o]gnosticate I dare say I cannot accept them.

Capt Coffin's unlading the Betsy was not absolutely a *voluntary act* of his — Twas a necessary measure which Cap.^t Doggetts' conduct *imposed* on him. — No Captain as signiary of the bill of lading undertakes to insure a market & the arrival of the property at any time but I've taken up the idea that he insures that he will not *prevent* the merchandise coming to market but will *prosecute the usual means* to carry it there as soon as possible. How far Cap^t Doggett's going away, avowedly to take a passage to New York, without leaving any substitute or direction to his mate, was a compliancie of the implied promise in signing the bill, is a question the affirmative of which cannot be supported with ease. And if he broke that implied promise he must not doubt[?] either by himself or his owners or the vessel owners to the injured the consequential damage — [2] to those damages the injured is morally entitled and I believe I err not when I add that he is legally so & can or at least ought to recover them —

As to the men — I claim for them their wages from the time they went aboard — according to the shipping paper — allowing all payments made to them.

Theirs is a plain case — & we may decide it easily (if we be both candid in our professions of a desire of adjusting the matter with justice) without the assistance of Mr Sitgreave's⁵⁰ learning —

I hate too much to take, that I will not freely give others, unnecessary trouble — but I must see right done to those who seek it thro' me. I dread a journey to Halifax, but this shall not impell me to an unequal adjustment of the claimants' demands —

I think Cap.^t Coffin entitled to —

- 1 The money advanced —
- 2 Interest on it till paid —
- 3 The expense of flat hire & hands in inshipp[in]g & reshipping

⁵⁰ John Sitgreaves (1757-1802), a lawyer friend of the Blounts. He served in the Revolutionary Army and in the Continental Congress from 1784 to 1785, represented New Bern in the House of Commons in 1786, and was Speaker in 1787. He favored ratification of the Constitution and was rewarded in 1789 by being named first a federal district attorney and then, in 1790, a federal judge succeeding John Stokes. Samuel A. Ashe, *History of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Printing Company, 2 volumes, 1925), II, 398-400, hereinafter cited as Ashe, *History of North Carolina*; Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 158.

his naval stores 4 — Cooperage & reinspection. 5 The difference in the freight, if any. 6 Some thing for the injury sustained by the detention of the Tar 7 — The Notary's & attourneys' fees.

The propriety of allowing all or any of these demands Im willing to submit to merchants used to maritime affairs — or argue it in Court.

If you do not think proper to submit to merch.^{ts} the merits of the claims and the assessing of the damages [3] if any be thought due, I cannot be charged with a desire of giving useless trouble & imposing useless expenses on the parties concerned —

I am Sir

very respectfully

Your mo obed Ser

F X Martin

Addressed: Jn.^o G Blount, Esq.

Washington

Mr Blackledge

John Gray Blount to Benjamin Woods

Washington Feby 18th 1796

D Sir⁵¹

I wrote you yesterday by M.^r Blackledge since then Cap.^t Meminger has arrived and informs me that Cap.^t Coffin is willing to settle as I proposed.

Have therefore drawn a Bill on Mess.^{rs} Potters in favor of M.^r Turner that if Cap.^t Coffin does not wish to take the Bill they may be sold to some other person for I really have no Money on hand

I have wrote M.^r Turner on that subject, have also empowered Cap.^t Meminger to draw on me at thirty days for all other sums he may find necessary.

This affair will give you much trouble all which you must add to your Bill

I am with much esteem

Your most obt

John G Blount

M^r Woods

⁵¹ From the Letter Book.

*David Allison to John Gray Blount*Philad.^a Feby. 18th 1796

Dear Sir

By last mail I received your letter of the 5.th Instant assuring that you had changed your opinion as to my being among the dead, why you could have entertained such thoughts I cant guess unless from the great [frights?] * which you have had, for if a steady information from myself by every post would have been sufficient to satisfy you on that score you had no reason to doubt, every post was the bearer of a contrary assertion from myself but I presume you begin even to doubt me on that score being so subject to falsify my word — this is only as to pecuniary matters —

I am sorry for the Cause of my not receiving a long letter from you as perhaps I might have gleaned some advantages from it either by advice or reprimand — I hope you will remember me in your next as you promised——

[2] Not one of my plans have yet succeeded to enable me to send you *The Means* altho I do not despair that I shall shortly give you satisfaction by some means or other. To begin it, I have your bond of the 29.th May to H Crugor in possession and if I thought it would add to the pleasure I would enclose it you — to effect this I sold to M.^r Morris the 100^m acre Tract at a quarter dollar subject to redemption — I was obliged to this as he declined the purchase at one dollar as mentioned to you by W. Blount and which I expected, he having agreed in the morning so to do but afterwards declined — this land must be conveyed to him and forwarded as early as possible.

The Doctor⁵² is paid his generous loan — one other bill is paid — I will attend when in Cash to Stuarts note I cant do it sooner

From M.^r Blounts information of sundry plan[s]† you have in contemplation one would be induced [3] to believe that your resources were not small as you alledge—

* Illegible.

⁵² Hugh Williamson (1735-1819), the learned and likeable scientist-doctor-statesman who served North Carolina in the Constitutional Convention of 1787 and in the early Congresses. He was a trustee of The University of North Carolina and of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and was a friend of all the Blount brothers. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, II, *passim*; *Dictionary of American Biography*, XX, 298-300. For the loan referred to, see Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 630.

† Hole in manuscript.

The Plates for Mr Price⁵³ is again Mentioned — if they were forwarded I am induced to believe having them engraved would operate against the Interest of M.^r Price if not better executed than the specimen already given — if you persist they must be had

I am

Your Ob^t Servant

David Allison

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington
N.^o. Carolina

David Allison to [John Gray Blount]

Phil^a Feb^y 25th 1796

Dear Sir

I expected to have been able to have forwarded you a bill on M.^r Collins⁵⁴ at the request of Mr. T[homas]. Blount from D^r [Hugh] Williamson and will enclose it if obtained before the post goes tomorrow — if not you are at liberty to draw for the amount of the sum proposed in favor of M.^r Collins obtaining his letter to D^r W[illiamson]. stating the principles — In aid to this fund, I have a demand against M.^r Jacob Blount⁵⁵ for sundry Articles shipped him consisting of Furniture for his house which his letter says is to be paid by M.^r Collins and for Iron & Nail Rod to amount of seven hundred and odd dollars for which I will make the bill and forward you a draft by next post — In my last I wrote you of the Arrangement made with the 100.000 acres of land in Tyrrell [County] which I would not have done had I supposed you [2] even contemplated that you was bound by the Contract with Sexton — No money yet and in great

⁵³ Jonathan Price, a surveyor and cartographer of Pasquotank County, who, with John Strother, prepared maps of the State of North Carolina reproduced in this volume. The plates referred to are probably those for maps of the coastal region, particularly Ocracoke Inlet, that were published first, in 1798; the map of the whole State was published in 1808. A map of the coast would stimulate trade at the Blount store on Ocracoke Island, and maps of the State would be of help in locating land for the Blounts; hence they heartily supported the publication. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 358, n.20, 630-631, 633, n.107; David Allison to Blount, January 21, 1796, in this volume.

⁵⁴ Probably Josiah Collins, father-in-law of Jacob Blount, Jr. and a prosperous trader and merchant of Edenton, or his son. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 54, n.103; David Allison to Blount, April 1, 1796, in this volume.

⁵⁵ Jacob (1760-1801) was the fifth son of Jacob Blount, Sr. His first wife was Nancy Collins, and the furniture referred to here was for his Edenton home. For a sketch of him see Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxvii-xxviii.

distress but I have hopes before the 5th April *The fatal day* if I succeed probably [it?] will be with you at that time — something must and shall be done at all events

I am D^r Sir

Yours

David Allison

P.S. inclosed is the Doctors bill for fifteen hundred dollars on M^r Collins

Benjamin Atkinson to John Gray Blount

Bensborough Feb^y 28th 1796

M^r John G Blount

Dear Sir, my not hearing from you since I was last at Washington induces me to make some enquiry about the Bell or if you have seen Captain Smith since I was down[.] I declined sending down last week as I waited to hear when there wuld be a chance of Shiping to Baltimore or Norfolk that I might deliver my Bacon out of the flatt on Board of the Vessel[.] we begin to load on Tuesday next and can be down thursday o[r Fr]*yday and shall have three Hundred b[arrels.]

Pray Sir inform me the best place you know to send for Some corn[.] the Sellers of that article here has sold all they can spare and the Inhabitants must Suffer they cannot keep life in their Stock till grass comes[.] do you know of no place to the Northward that Naval Stores woud Exchange for grain. believe me what little corn is here is held at 60/. P Barrel & if no corn is imported will soon be 100/.

Should you send to Baltimore for Iron remember me for one Ton of flatt Bars Assorted I have had latterly rapid Sales for Iron so as to be nearly without any. Sir Your Most ob^t

Ben. Atkinson

Addressed: John G Blount Esq^r

Merchant

Washington

By Ben Deberry

* Manuscript torn.

Amos Johnston⁵⁶ to John Gray Blount

Town Creek [Brunswick County] 1.st March 1796

Dear Sir

I have Examined the Saddle Boses sent by Mr Cokeley⁵⁷ and am Surprised to find Mr Cokeley so Much Mistaken in the quality of the Boses — Supposing him to have Certainly Known puter from Silver as he told me he thought them Verry Nice Silver Wash.^d and they prove to be only lind with Puter. but was much more Surprised to find that Instead of 576 Setts which I think should be in Sixteen Groce their is only 96 Setts which is 480 Setts Short of the Boses which if I am not Verry much Mistaken you said his Bill mentioned and which if the Cost is 32£ (which I think was the sum you told me) would have been about what the 16 Groce of that quality Shoud have Cost[.] I shall send them back to you and hope you will acquaint Mr Cokley of it a[s] the Boses will by no means sute me and if they Suted me they are not worth more than 6. 0.0 paper money as I have better than them which I would sell by the Single Sett @ 2/ so I hope you will take Care of the Boses & if you have Charg^d me with them give me credit for the Am^t when you receive them: The am.^t of the Keg of powder which Mr Schermerhorn⁵⁸ omited sending me is Charg^d in his Bill of 26th July 1794 at 3 — 12 — 0 New York Currency which with 5 pc.^t Commissions on it makes 3..15.7 Equal to 4. 13-2 3/4 of our money which I hope you will Credit me for — —

I am Sir yours &^c

Amos Johnston

Addressed: John G Blount Esq.^r.

Merc.^t.

Washington

⁵⁶ An active merchant of Town Creek. He was one of the Blounts' best customers and often joined Benjamin Atkinson in leasing ships from the Blount firm.

⁵⁷ Benjamin Coakley of Princeton, North Carolina, on the Meherrin River near the Virginia boundary. (The present town of Princeton is about 40 miles southeast of Raleigh, in Johnston County.) He was both a supplier of raw material and a retailer of merchandise for the Blounts, and served as a political lieutenant in his Northampton County area. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 450; II, *passim*, especially 475, 491-492.

⁵⁸ Peter Schermerhorn, a merchant of the firm of Simon Schermerhorn and Son, of South Street, New York City, with which the Blount firm did considerable business. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*; *Commercial Directory* (Philadelphia: J. C. Kayser and Company, 1823), 144.

*John Gray Blount to Richard Lake*⁵⁹Washington March 3.rd 1796M.^r Richard LakeSir⁶⁰

Inclosed you have a Bill Lading for Sixty Six thousand of Boards and fifty thousand twenty two Inch Shingles shipped by us on the Ship North Carolina Cap.^t Hudgin all which you will please to sell to best advantage [2] on our account, and remitt the nett proceeds by the Same Vessell to M.^r Peter Schermerhorn Merchant New York unless the produce of your Island should have fallen at least 20 per Cent-since the first of Feb^y last. If either Rum or Sugar of a good Quality has fallen that much you will please remit in both or either of them articles as you may have reason to believe will best answer our purpose

If the Ship should not proceed to New York please pay the nett proceeds to Cap.^t Gorham of our Brig Tuley should he have not left there and if he has left there then ship the money as before directed by some safe Vessell

We have observed a charge of 5 per C.^t in some accounts handed from your place for remitting the money . . no such charge has appeared in yours for handing the money to our Captains, Should it be the Custom of the place and you mean to pursue the Custom and Charge for remitting money, you will to save that expense please hand the Cash — with your account to Cap.^t Gorham as before [3] directed if there, and if not hand the same to Cap.^t Hudgin[;] we will risque him without the formality of a Bill Lading and for that we have experinced that you do not charge

We shall be much pleased to hear what we have no doubts of, which is that the ship may be dispatched to satisfaction.

Mess.^{rs} Balentine & Fairley have heretofore done the business of her owners at your place, but we had her on charter to bring a load to your place of M.^r John Ingram of Montego Bay and She was Cast away last August Gale, we have very lately rec.^d a Letter from M.^r Ingram in which he appears much dissatisfied, and requested a Ballance in our hands remitted to M.^r Thomas Buchannan of New York, we shall do so and let the

⁵⁹ A younger brother of the London merchant William Charles Lake, Richard Lake was a West Indian merchant and correspondent of the Blounts. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 227, n.3.

⁶⁰ From the Letter Book.

owners of the Ship take the Ballance of her load. Which they also Consign You

We are with much esteem
Your Most Obt
John G & Tho Blount

David Allison to [John Gray Blount]

Phil^a March 3^d 1796

Dear Sir

On the 1.st Instant I received yours of the 29th Ult^o stating sundry Charges against me all which I admit — to enter into the detail at large would be too tedious — I observed in my letter I was bound to convey the Green Swamp⁶¹ — so far true — that I proposed it to the Judge as a foreign thing⁶² is also true and hoped thereby to get 1 Doll. instead of /4 is equally true — but that I ever made use of deception to induce you or any of your friends to enter into Contracts which I had not, on the General principle good reasons to believe proper, I am not willing to admit, that I have done wrong is plain but my anxiety to do great things induced me to these Errors and *I believe I have paid the price in full*, I do not complain even if I never enjoy any of the Benefits which are in store which with prudence I am sure are far greater than were contemplated by the most sanguine — my only sorrow now and for time past has been that any person but myself has been involved in this business—for *my fortitude is great* and I do not yet fear the Event altho I confess my [2] faith is greatly staggered from the scarcity of Cash —

With my premeditated deception your friends Davis & Williams⁶³ shall not be injured. I believe the Contract is to pay to

⁶¹ 60,000 acres in Brunswick County which were purchased by John Gray Blount from General Benjamin Smith through a third party. Acting on instructions from Allison, Blount was to address a formal letter to him stating that he had purchased the land (actually bought for six shillings per acre) at one dollar per acre, and that if Allison wanted it he was to remit by return mail. This elaborate scheme was intended to delude the prospective buyer in Philadelphia, Judge James Wilson. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 598, 603, 619.

⁶² *I.e.*, as a speculation outside the contract under negotiation.

⁶³ Probably John Davis and John Pugh Williams of New Hanover County. The latter, who died in 1803, was the brother of Benjamin Williams and father of Mrs. John Haywood. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 442, 607-608; "Census 1790," in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 823; Benjamin Smith to John Davis, July 17, 1796, in this volume; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, May 9, 1803.

M.^r W^m Smith⁶⁴ here equally with B[enjamin?]. S[mith?] in North Carolina — which will be done and the rec^t remitted by next post to you — *accidents excepted*.

You say Jacob Rhodes⁶⁵ is coming on and add this among other plagues, from this I discover you know nothing of my difficulties — *let him come* if you are clear of him I do not care for his Dunns, I can stand them.

I could say much on your hints but prudence directs I should not as I am the only person who can bear the Events of business without general Injury.

Every Exertion will be used to send you enough to pay the Entry takers fees &c. I hope shortly to send you the Judges paper in lieu if you think any of it will answer the purpose.

I am D Sir

Your Ob^t Servant

David Allison

John Gray Blount to Richard and James Potter

Washington March 3.rd 1796

Mess.^{rs} Rich.^d & Ja.^s Potters

Gent.ⁿ ⁶⁶

I have this day rec.^d a Letter from Cap.^t Meminger informing me that he has got all his matters respecting Brig Betsey settled and that he has taken a full freight to Norfolk and expects to sail to morrow, He also informs me that he has negociated a set of Bills which I drew on you in favor of M.^r Thom Turner and drawn on me for considerable other sums which I had given him the power to do in order to extricate the Betsey on the best possible Terms he could and from knowledge

⁶⁴ Smith (1762-1840) was a native of South Carolina, and practiced law in York District. He was elected to the United States Senate in 1816 as a Democrat, and served from December, 1816 to March, 1823 and again, 1826-1831. He later moved to Alabama, where he died. He apparently engaged in land speculation with his brother, Benjamin. David Allison to Blount, January 7, 1796, n.14, in this volume; *Biographical Directory of the American Congress 1774-1961: The Continental Congress, September 5, 1774, to October 21, 1788, and the Congress of the United States from the First to the Eighty-Sixth Congress, March 4, 1789, to January 3, 1961, Inclusive* (Washington, D. C.: United States Government Printing Office, Eighty-Fifth Congress, Second Session, House Document No. 442, 1961), 1625, hereinafter cited as *Biographical Directory of Congress*.

⁶⁵ An occasional business partner of the Blounts who, as a member of a company of speculators which John Gray Blount formed in 1795, became increasingly reluctant, tried to recover his interest from Allison, and later sued Blount. Introduction; Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*; David Allison to Blount, April 1, 7, 1796; Jacob Rhodes to Blount, May 6, June 2, 1796; and Edward Jones to Blount, May 6, 1796, in this volume.

⁶⁶ From the Letter Book.

of M.^r Turner and M.^r Woods the merchant and attorney to whom I advised him. I have no doubt [2] the best was done which could be and I flatter myself that either Cap.^t Meminger or me of them has transmitted you the particulars

I have this day taken up one Bill drawn by Captain Meminger on me for Dollars 284 and drawn two setts on you for the same one in favor of M.^r Robert Bowen Merchant New York for 180 Dollars the other in favor of M.^r Mathew Carey for 104 dollars both which being on account the Brig Betsey hope they will be duly honoured, they are both forward this Post

I expect to see in a few days M.^r Woods the Attorney when I will forward the particulars if not already done

I am Your most obt
John G Blount

Richard and James Potter to John Gray Blount

March 3, 1796

M^r J. G. Blount

Sir Your most esteemed favour of the 17 Ult.^o is now before us, we know not sufficiently how to thank you for your goodness in this wretched business of the Brigg Betsey⁶⁷ — we hope at a future day to have an opportunity of acknowledging it more substantially than by words — M.^r Turners letter of the same date as yours to his friend M^r W^m Bell gives a very unpromising picture of the Brig, we have sent him all the proffs in our power, with respect to the seamen they certainly have recd one months advance pay, but not by us, for the owners of the Vessell we never Saw her or had any managem.^t of her[.] Do for heavens Sake Sir get the business terminated Some way or other, we shall most punctually pay any Bills you may draw upon us & at any Sight you please[;] it is much to be regretted Cap^t Meminger did not fulfill the charter party⁶⁸ & proceed [2] to New York we could then have plan'd her future destination without any sort of difficulty

⁶⁷ See Richard and James Potter to Blount, January 10, 1796; and Blount to Richard and James Potter, March 3, 1796, in this volume.

⁶⁸ Charter party, a contract for the lease of a ship for a predetermined voyage. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 299.

We once more entreat you Sir to exert yourself for us, upon this most unpleasant occasion, & believe us to be

Your Sincerely Obligated

Hble Serv.^{ts}

R.^d & Jas Potter

Phila.^a

March 3. 1796

With respect to the Rascal of a Captain we have no Idea, he dare ever Show his face here, be pleased to write Cap.^t Meminger to follow the directions of M.^r. Turner —

Addressed: M^r. J. G. Blount
Merchant
Washington near
Newbern
North Carolina

Lewis Meminger to John Gray Blount

Newbern March 3rd. 96

M^r J. G. Blount
Sir

Tomorrow I shall sail for Norfolk with a full freight,⁶⁹ it is by the advice of M^r. Turner that I have taken freight for that place otherways I should have came to Washington for a Cargoe, but I believe it will answer well particulary if I can get freight from there to the North^d. M^r. Martin [ha]*s excepted the Bills and paid down [th]e* Mony.

Y^r. Hmbl^e. Sv^t.

free

Lewis Meminger

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r
Washington

⁶⁹ See Richard and James Potter to Blount, January 10, 1796; Thomas Turner to Blount, February 17, 1796; and Blount to Richard James Potter, March 3, 1796, in this volume.

* Word obscured by seal.

*Henry Tuley⁷⁰ to John Gray Blount*Slade Creek March 3rd 1796

Sir

I have got two stroke [strakes] ⁷¹ a side on the grampus and expect to have her shut in to the bends⁷² in Ten or Twelve days if the weather is good[;] I fear it is out of my power to have her finished by the time Agreed on will do all in my power — She is Well Constructed for the popus intend[ed] — polprus⁷³ has not Co[a]l to keep him at work mor then four of five days — it will be as well to send the oakim with the Co[a]l I intend to begin calkin as soon as plank[ed] up to the Bends — ples to send me the Hogs lard — my nesety is sutch that I must have Eightteen Barrells of Corn — if you can do me the favour to let me have it ples to inform me and oblige your humbel st

Henry Tuley

NB the order in favour of Thomas Mason is good

H T

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr

*David Allison to John Gray Blount*Philad^a. March 11th. 1796

Dear Sir

All my struggles and industry have yet proved ineffective to raising you the Funds which I had contemplated[.] I have not yet been able to get a decisive answer from either of the parties, I will not however cease one moment from the pursuit nor one after obtaining until it is forwarded to you for altho I am really much pressed here yet I think more of your situation and the business in N^o. Carolina than of my own as I am certain some way can be had here to rid me — nothing could keep up my spirits under the pressures here and the Calls abroad but the certainty that a short time will end it to very great advantage

A Letter dated at London 30th Nov^r. from one of my small

⁷⁰ A semi-literate shipwright who built several ships for the Blount firm. He wrote from various places on the Pungo River, an inlet of the Pamlico River about 20 miles east of Washington. He seems to have built the "Grampus" at Slades Creek, on the east side of the Pungo. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 67, n.44; Thomas to John Gray Blount, August 9, 1796, in this volume.

⁷¹ A strake is a single line of planking extending from one end of a ship to the other.

⁷² The gunwales, or the upper edge of a ship's side.

⁷³ A slave, also spelled Poleprus.

land men there gives this information "I have prospects of making sale here to great profit. I have had an offer of Goods for which they would take half bills on London and the other half in Land — the Georgia land to be valued at 4/. per acre, now I have [2] it in contemplation to get some Gentleman here to come under acceptance for the one half which is to be in Bills for which I must sacrifice a part of the profits — I have made mention of this to some of my friends and I think it will do." these lands cost us 4 1/2 Cents per acre payable in Goods. — he has also some offers from French Merchants of becoming interested to obtain the selling of the lands — Pennsylvania lands sell there he says from 10/6 to 30/., Virginia 3/6 — these prices give me flattering hopes of my Land scheme forwarded you by Major Carson, as all mine on an average dont cost as much as the Georgia lands alone will sell for — if success attends this, all is well — I have not a word from Col^o Thomas⁷⁴ or my French Agents, I long to hear as I am sure of Comfort from them, if otherwise I am prepared for the Worst —

Something effective must and shall be done for the remainder of the lands in N^o. Carolina in a short time, depend on every exertion being made —

I wrote you yesterday introducing Mr. Smithey who lived with [me?] as Clerk[.] he is just entering into business with Mr. Budden [3] they have small Funds[.] Budden [is] under the Patronage of Mr. Nicholson who has urged me to favor Smithey[.] for these reasons I introduced him to your attention[.] if you can give him either advice or other aid, I am convinced of his Integrity and that he will pay⁷⁵

Being sick I could not write last night and no more time this morning

I am D^r Sir

Your Ob^t Servant

David Allison

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.

Washington

N^o. Carolina

⁷⁴ Abishai Thomas, probably a native Georgian who lived with John Gray Blount for some time and acted as his agent in many land matters. Through Blount influence he became a claims agent in North Carolina and later (1798-1801) chief clerk in the Navy Department. His habits of intemperence and gambling prevented a stable career. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*, especially 24, n.67; Henry Potter to Blount, March 25, 1799, in this volume.

⁷⁵ Blount undertook to aid Smithey, who proved to be a business failure. See David Allison to Blount, April 29, 1796; and Blount to Robert Smithey, June 17, July 24, 1796, in this volume; Letter Book, *passim*; protested bill of August 25, 1796, in "Other Papers for 1796-1802," in this volume.

*Amos Johnston to John Gray Blount*Town Creek 11th March 1796

Dear Sir

I Send 60 barrels of pork to be Shiped to the address of M^r Warren Ashley by first oppertunity[.] also a letter to M^r Ashley which I hope you will forward with the pork and Navil Stores Sent you before if they are not already Sent[.] please to Send me one tearce of Rum one barrel of Sugar and one Hogshead of Molasses if to be had at aney Rate the Molasses & Sugar at all most aney price in Reason and I will pay Cash or aney produce that I Can Command when wanted[.] please let me know if the Stores Sent before is all Shipt. and the price of tar Pitch & pork in Washington at present[.] I wrote you 1st instant Respecting the Saddle Bosses from M^r Coakley I now Send them back and hope you will Receive them and advise him of the transaction[.] I have Sent you what Corn I promised you including the meal but have to assshore you it is much a gainst the interest of my Neighbours who are in greate want of it

I am Very Respectfully yr^s &^c

Amos Johnston

NB please Send the letter for M^r ashley
when you Send the pork

Addressed: John G Blount Esq^r
Washington

John Gray Blount to Thomas Blount [with enclosure]

Washington March 14th 1796

D Sir⁷⁶

Major Blount has now commenced building at Tranters Creek ⁷⁷ a place more convenient to this, and of course more to the satisfaction of his wife, and as it will not be convenient for him to carry on both his Mill at Pungo, and the one at Tranters Creek We have agreed to add his Pungo Mill & a large Tract of my Swamp Land [2] together for sale. The two connected will

⁷⁶ From the Letter Book.⁷⁷ The house was "Bellefont," home of Reading Blount, see n.187, in this volume. Tranter's Creek flows south to the Tar River in Pitt County. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, map opposite 64.

make the most valuable property in the hands of a Company or one able man that can be got hold of any where in the part of the Country.

I have had the whole surveyed and herewith you have a Platt To which I have annexed a description of the whole pointing out many of the advantages appertaining thereto and fixed the price which we will take Viz^t. 20,000 Dollars payable at 1 . . 2 . & 3 Years, When I say the price I do not mean the value for that is far short of it when we take into account the many advantages which attend it, but to use them advantages it requires a Capital Superior to what we can spare for that particular object having so many others in View

We therefore wish the same sold to enable us to mature other undertakings —

Mr. John Allen⁷⁸ who has signed the description has lived at the Mills and knows them well, He also has made a survey of the Lands described and is now the Surveyor of Beaufort and deputy Surveyor of Hyde County and perhaps not only better acquainted with the whole of the Swamp than any other man but from [3] having travelled much not only in South Carolina but in most of the Northern States, must be a better judge of both the quality of Lands and their natural advantages than most other People

You will please offer a sale agreeable to the terms, here in stated, or you may enlarge the sum & time or Shorten the time and lessen the sum according to the value of money rating Interest at 10 per C^t. per annum.

I am as usual

Mr Thos^s. Blount

John G Blount

[*enclosure*]

The Mill is across Broad Creek ⁷⁹ a large branch of Pungo River which mouths about eight miles up the River, and is navigable to Man of War Point with Vessells drawing eight feet water and to the mills with Rafts and small Crafts

The Mill works two saws in one House and the Grist Mill

⁷⁸ Apparently two men of this name were actively associated with the Blounts. One was an overseer on William Blount's farm at Piney Grove, near Greenville. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 120, n.90. The other, probably referred to here, was a large slaveowner, something of an expert on canal building, and a member of the legislature from Craven County from 1788 to 1794. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 457; John Allen to Blount, November 28, 1796, in this volume.

⁷⁹ In Beaufort County. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, map opposite 64.

runs two pair of stones under the Roof both saw and Grist mill will need repairs this or the next year, The loam is of good Clay and well settled, the last August Storm raised the Tide two feet over it without doing it any injury — [4]

The mill Pond is large and the swamp is Levell [?], if cleared and cultivated would produce 5000 bushells of Rice annually, and is easily cleared, all the Trees and bushes which standing water will kill being dead. The Water might be drawn off in March a Crop Rice made and the water raised in the Fall timely to saw 200 M of Lumber, clean the Rice and grind sufficient for the neighborhood for the Fall to amount to 500 bushells of Grain.

When the Mill Pond is up in the winter it affords Navigation at present for two miles up the same and if cleared out might be extended so as to bring down Lumber two miles further, on both sides of which the land is loaded with valuable Timber such as Cypress, Juniper, or Red and white oak

From the present head of water transportation a Road may be with a small expence opened to Longacre[,]⁸⁰ distance four miles[,] which would pass through a body of white oak and other valuable Timber Superior in size and Quality to most in this country and long acre is surrounded with Similar Timber now almost useless from the great distance it is to hall to where it can be water born, vis 12 to 18 Miles — [5] Was a canal cut from from [*sic*] the head of Broad Creek to Long acre it would reclaim and render fit to settle on, Thousands of Acres of Land higher & richer than most of the present inhabited part of Hyde County and render Board Creek Mills one of the best stands for a retail Store in the County —

On the Mill Plantation is erected a small dwelling House and several Negro Houses, a Store House, Barn & Stables, with Ground enough cleared to make 500 bus Indian Corn most of which will produce good wheat and Flax, but is more particularly adapted to Grass Such as Timothy, Clover, blue Grass, &c.

⁸⁰ A north-south ridge in Beaufort and Washington counties. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, map opposite 64.

*John Gray Blount to Peter Mallet[t]*⁸¹

Washington March 18th 1796

D Sir⁸²

There are two men in your neighborhood which have Land at Cumberland which I want[,] that is Young Waddle who married Miss Nash and Doctor Forges of Wilmington

I will give one fourth a Dollar per acre payable in twelve months, and any part which you can make it convenient to pay shall be considered as a payment of this day from you and rather than not get the Land, will pay Interest from the date, but they may [be] purchased much Cheaper if sold for Tax or Fine, which may have been, and many others will be, but I do not wish to purchase in that way.

I already hold much and am obliged to have an agent at Nashville which is too far off W^m Blount for him to attend to & there fore I might as well have much as little for him to attend to

Please inform me soon respecting them Lands

I am with much esteem

Yours &C

John G Blount

Mr. Peter Mallet[t]

*John Gray Blount to William Murdock*⁸³

Washington March 18th 1796

Mr. William Murdock

Sir⁸⁴

Some time since last winter I caused to be forwarded a Power of attorney from a Henry Williamson of this State formerly of London to a receive a Legacy⁸⁵

Should that power have arrived safe, and you received or secured to receive any sum in consequence thereof, I wish you

⁸¹ Mallett and his brother Daniel were members of a number of mercantile and shipping firms of Wilmington, North Carolina. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 33, n.5.

⁸² From the Letter Book.

⁸³ Murdock was an English merchant whom Thomas Blount had met while in England in 1787, and who became his close friend. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 316-319; II, *passim*.

⁸⁴ From the Letter Book.

⁸⁵ See Mary Fitzgerald to [Henry Williamson], June 24, 1796; Parnell to William Murdock, June 24, 1796; and William Murdock to Blount, June 27, 1796, in this volume.

to furnish Goods to the amount thereof, to be lodged with Mr. William C. Lake⁸⁶ of Liverpool by the first of July next when I expect we shall have a vessell there in which they will be shipped.

As both the amount, and whether the Legacy will be paid is uncertain, have sent no Memorandum of what Goods to send, shall therefore rely on your procuring Such as you know from experience will answer this Country

If the sum should be large you will please make the assortment as good as possible, but if small, let the principal part be woolens & cutlery —

I before wrote you that if any difficulty arose [2] it would be best to Compromise, as the man is both very old and very poor, and withal very imprudent and extravagant, so that I am obliged to make large[r] advances to him in consequence of having received his power, than I would wish on an uncertainty, You will therefore much oblige me by an early notice of What I may expect

This goes to Philadelphia to be forwarded and should Thomas Blount order an appropriation of all or any part of the money, you will please follow his directions

I am

Your Most Obt

John G Blount

John Gray Blount to James C. Mountfloreance⁸⁷

Washington March 18th 1796

Dear Sir,⁸⁸

Not having heard from you since your[s] from Philadelphia conclude you have made no Sales of Land, and as I have sold

⁸⁶ William Charles Lake was a merchant of Liverpool with whom the Blounts had long done business. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 199, n.49.

⁸⁷ Major James Cole Mountfloreance, educated in Paris, was a schoolmaster in New Bern following his service in the Continental Army. He served in the North Carolina House of Commons and in the Fayetteville Convention of 1789. A land speculator, he early in the 1790's contracted with the Blounts to sell their land in Europe on a commission basis, while also serving as agent for their mercantile interests. It was hoped that he could sell land and transport the purchasers to America in the Blounts' vessels, thus making their trips more profitable. For these purposes he had traveled in Europe in 1792 and 1793, and returned there later, but the scheme proved unsuccessful. Alice B. Keith (ed.), "Letters from James Cole Mountfloreance to Members of the Blount Family," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, XIV (July, 1937), 251-288.

⁸⁸ From the Letter Book.

some of them, and the rest have risen above the price you were limited to and the time of that agreement having long expired

I now request that you will not make Sale of any of them but deliver the Grants either to Mr. [James] Monro, our Minister at Paris, or to Mr. Fulwar Skipwith⁸⁹ together with all such other papers as you have respecting the Titles —

I am with sincere [wishes] for your Welfare
Your Most Obt
John G Blount

Majr. James C Mountflorince

Ben Atkinson to John Gray Blount

Bensborough — March 21st 1796

Mr. John G Blount

Dear Sir By Mr Battle I duly rec^d your Esteemed of the 16th Curr^t and am glad to hear that you have got Worden to take the Naval Stores to Norfolk[;] as the Price there is looking down the sooner they Arrive so much the Better and hope that Jasper⁹⁰ will be up to his appointment in the Brigantine to Liverpool.

The Naval Stores now sent down by Andrews and those sent down last week by Spell in Johnsons Flatt is to be Shiped Immediately unto Baltimore the Eastern Shore of Myraland or Alexandria where ever your information is best and consigned to any man you think is Best and Bartered for Corn to be Brought home at the return of Vessel, should they go to Baltimore order One Ton of Iron in flat Broad & narrow Barrs assorted the Balance in corn. But in case that Vanorden[']s⁹¹ New Vessel [2] is got up to Washington have them coopered and marked & delivered on Board of her for to go to Liverpool, as

⁸⁹ A United States consul in Paris, Skipwith was a member of a prominent mercantile house of London, Paris, and Richmond, Virginia, with whom the Blount firm had numerous transactions. In 1802 he was named United States commercial agent in Paris. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, *passim*; II, 81, n.138; *Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate of the United States of America* (Washington: Duff Green, 3 volumes, 1828), I, 403, hereinafter cited as *Executive Journal*.

⁹⁰ James Jasper's son or nephew, possibly on his first important voyage. Ben Atkinson to Blount, January 9, 1796, in this volume; "Census 1790," in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 641; Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 38; Blount to Richard Lake, May 14, 1796, in Letter Book; Amos Johnston to Blount, April 25, 1796, in this volume.

⁹¹ Hadrianus Van Noorden, a wealthy shipowner and shipper who helped develop the town of Washington. His name is carried in the Pitt census of 1800 as Had Van Noorden. Letter Book, *passim*; C. Wingate Reed, *Beaufort County: Two Centuries of its History* (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton Company, 1962), 110, hereinafter cited as Reed, *Beaufort County*; *Second Census of the United States: 1800*, National Archives, Washington, D. C., hereinafter cited as *Second Census: 1800*.

we have already agreed about the freight, but I suppose the Next load — which will come down at the return of the flatt will be time enough for Vanordens Brigantine[.] Should any Vessel offer for Myraland &c that cannot take all the Naval Stores load with what they can carry ordering corn in exchange for if the Naval Stores cannot be Bartered for the corn they can be sold at 60 Days credit & corn Bought to the same amount and time of Payment[.] I shall come down this day Two weeks and Shall be happy to get my Acc^t. Settled please to have it ready. I am sorry to Trouble you so much but you will ere long see the whole of those Expenses paid with the utmo punctuality

I am Dear Sir with my
wishes for your Prosperity
Your Most Ob^t H^m Sv^t
Ben Atkinson

Addressed: Mr. John G Blount
Merch^t
Washington

by Andrews

Amos Johnston to John Gray Blount

Town Creek 22nd March 1796

Dear Sir

I have Sent by the flat Some Navel Stores the Pitch I want Shipt to Philadelphia to Tho^s & Peter Mackies[,] the tar to Norfolk if aney oppertunity to them places before I Come Down[;] also 1 Cask of firs & 1 bundle of Dear Skins to Philadelphia at aney Rate [send] the firs & Skins if no Room for pitch and [send] 60 barrels of Pork & 1 of fat to Norfolk under the Same Directions [as] of the last Sent[.] if aney Molasses Sugar Coffee & Rum or aney of them please Send me Some by the flot at aney Rate Sugar & molasses if to be had. if Cap^t. Ross Sails to Liverpool before I come Down and you find that you Can Send aney thing their for me this Spring please to write Mr Lake on the Subject as I intend aney freight you Carry for me to be Con-

signed to him but whot I git in with Mr. Atkinson by Capt Jasper
I Expect must be Consigned to Mess^{rs}. Gilchrist & Barry⁹²

I am Very Respectfully yr^s &^c
Amos Johnston

NB if you See that Capt. Jasper will be Ready take in befor the
flat Can Come Down again Dont Send this load away
A J

Addressed: John G: Blount Esq^r
Merch^t. Washington

Abner Neale to John Gray Blount

New Bern 31st. March 1796.—

Dear Sir/.

I have at length Sold my House and Lot and forward you a
Deed to Sign which you will please to do and return by the
bearer, the Terms of Sale is 1000 dollars in hand 1000 in One
Year and 1000 in two years, thus you see I am preparing for
Washington, I am to keep possession untill the last of May next
by which time I hope you will be able to get me a House, M^{rs}.
Neale and Family I expect will go sooner, tho' I must stay to
settle my business and shall live in the Office untill that is
Compleated, I shall as soon as I can rent the Tan yard and
then I hope I can bid adieu to New bern, at least as a place of
residence as I am quite Tired of it as such, I also forward my
Deed [2] to you as Att^y of M^{rs}. Stanbury that you may know
the Title is in you; perhaps it will be better that it should be
returned to M^r. Boon for his satisfaction. — I send you Chair
and Harness compleatly repair'd in my Opinion. I am with
Respect &c all well

Abner Neale

The Bearer M^r. Paul Gould
who I have prevaild on to go
with this is a Young Man that
I have a high Opinion of. my
Court comeing on Monday next prevents
my writing more fully.

⁹² Gilchrist and Barry was a firm of Liverpool merchants. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 298, 451-452, 455.

I am &c.

A. Neale

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Washington.

Hon^d. p^r

Mr. Paul Gould.

[David Allison to John Gray Blount]

Phil.^a Ap^l. 1st 1796

Dear Sir

Indisposition both of Body and Mind had nearly induced me not to write you knowing that Mr. Blount had given you every thing I could say. the principal of which is the attempt to relieve your wants which have troubled me much for this purpose I have in *possession* not expectancy seven one thousand dollar notes which I am endeavouring to send by express to Hillsboro. for your order — I am endeavouring other arrangements whether they will succeed or not is yet uncertain for so I count every thing until I have the possession.

As I am now writing I will answer your letter of the 3^d. Ult.^o shortly — First I have written you as often as I suppose, for previous to your letter I missed but one post — I am sorry My Packet is unintelligible from its Frenchification — This proceeded from necessity being of French and English extraction, however I hope that will not prevent your good Will to the *Issue* if any good should arise from the Connexion, which I do not doubt, nay I am almost certain of a *Million* therefrom — Let Rhodes⁹³ come, I am prepared to stand every attack, however severe.

I am really sorry to hear your lamentations accompanying your relation that Mr. Strother will soon have executed Drafts of several of the Counties where our land lie — It is true Mr. Blount they are sold and the price fixed and we once thought a good one and even now I would not give half the money altho so well demarcated in Strothers Map,⁹⁴ I hope knowing these

⁹³ Jacob Rhodes of Robeson County, the complaining partner. Introduction; David Allison to Blount, March 3, n.65, April 15, 1796; and Rhodes to Blount, May 6, June 2, 1796, in this volume; "Census 1790," in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 970; *Second Census: 1800*, Robeson County.

⁹⁴ See David Allison to Blount, January 21, 1796, n.33; February 18, 1796, n.53, in this volume.

lands in part as I do I shall never repine at the sale if I prove fortunate in receiving the payments as stipulated, for be assured I believe [2] no better could possibly have been done with them and altho the price per acre sounds *small* yet when all added together it makes a sum total not to be complained of—I cannot complain even altho I am said to be very avaricious.

To your next Paragraph I shall not say much, it is respecting the sale to Mr. Morris, I do not, altho I perhaps could, plead any excuse for that sale, or even intend to justify — The reasons operating on my mind at that period, if again forced on me as they were, I would not [on?]*ly sell your Tyrrell lands altho worth one dollar, but would sell my Claim in the Kingdom of Heaven to clear myself of such continual chidings [as I?]* received for the failure and eternal dunning —

Being now clear of that I have only to invent another plan to clear the land which I have no doubt of doing, it shall be done if I am obliged to pay the sum back in the 4 Months in Cash to Mr. [Robert] Morris, for I would not for that sum prevent your shewing to Posterity the quality of your lands, and your determination to hold them —

Your temptation to the land speculators is as nugatory as to cast Pearls before Swine.

I will attend to your Wishes and send you Certificates as early as I can, I want the land equally bad as you do the Certificates.

The Plates shall be sent you by your Vessel when she arrives and hope you will succeed in your expectations of the Maps

I send you inclosed a bill on Mr. Collins for eight hundred and eleven dollars sixty six Cents.

I wish you to send me a General Power of Attorney or to Mr. T Blount to convey your lands I have here, nothing can be done with them for want of this power

* Manuscript defaced.

*David Allison and Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount
and John Haywood⁹⁵*

Phil^a. April 1st 1796

Dear Sir

Inclosed I send you seven thousand dollars by Express which I hope will come to hand in time to answer your demands⁹⁶ — I could not get an Express one hour sooner, he is obliged to deliver this before ten O Clock on the 9th Instant

John Gray Blount Esqr.

at

Hillsboro.

I am Dr Sir

yours

David Allison

John Haywood Esqr.

Dr Sir

The inclosed money is to be applied to the payment of Monies due from the Entry Takers of several counties for whom Mr. Blount is security — If he should not be at Hillsboro. I have directed the letter to you, for the purpose that you hold it subject to his order, and slay [stay] the proceedings against the Entry takers as far as is proper so to do

I am with great Respect

Dr. Sir

Your Ob^t Serv^t.

David Allison

Sir,

[April 1, 1796]

The Money herein sent is as you are told by Mr Allison, to be applied to the use of J. G. Blount & I presume if he should not be with you at the time you will receive it you will have rec^d. advice from him respecting the manner of applying it — If there should be any difficulty arising from the kind of money sent I suppose it can be obviated by your giving a receipt

⁹⁵ From the Ernest Haywood Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, hereinafter cited as Haywood Papers. The three letters are on one sheet of paper.

⁹⁶ Blount was being dunned by the entry takers of several counties for fees for land entered earlier, and had been pressing Allison for money for some time. The lands in question had been, or were to be, sold to Judge James Wilson, but Allison had been unable to forward enough cash to cover the fees, and his claims (with Blount as security) were due to expire if payment was not made soon. See Introduction; David Allison to Blount, January 7, March 3, April 1, and April 15, 1796, in this volume.

for so much as it may amount to at the current Exchange—
Holding it subject to redemption by that amount of paper money
which I am sure he would in a very short time, if not im-
mediately, pay —

I am

your Mo. Ob.^t

Tho. Blount

Ap. 1. 1796

Addressed: John Haywood, Esquire

Treas^r.

Hillsborough

N. Carolina

By Mr John

Harris — Express

}

*John Gray Blount to John Hall*⁹⁷

Washington Ap.¹ 3rd 1796

Mr. John Hall

Sir⁹⁸

With much difficulty I have got our surveying nearly complete
and the man who Bears this to Raleigh also carried the War-
[ran]ts of the Fifty thousand Acres of Land on both sides of
the head of Great Alligator River in Hyde County adjoining and
between the Grant to you for 195,000 acres and two Grants of
my own in Tyrrell one for 100 and the other of Fifty thousand
acres and I am led to believe by the Surveyor is very Valuable[.]
the Grant comes out in my name and I shall execute to you a
Deed. The Ballance to make up the 300 M I shall shortly get
completed, that will be swamp but seperated from all the rest
and probably in two Tracts but of equal value with any of the
rest —

I have not yet been able to make out an exact statement of

⁹⁷ A large scale speculator since 1783, Hall had earlier made a contract with Blount to sell land in northern cities. Blount would buy the land with Hall's money, convey it to Hall, and receive one-eighth of the profits. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 342, n.2, and n.3, 653. At this time Hall's chief interest was selling North Carolina swamp land to John Nicholson and Robert Morris. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*; Thomas to John Gray Blount, February 8, February 16, May 3, 1798; and J. Trenchard to David Allison, September 1, 1798, in this volume. Hall survived the crash of 1797, recouped his fortune somewhat, then died on January 25, 1801, in Philadelphia. William Shannon to Blount, January 27, 1801, in this volume.

⁹⁸ From the Letter Book.

the Expence but from what I have been able to collect think the amt. will stand [2] nearly as stated in the mem^o. herewith, I have drawn on you in favor of Mr. James Easton for 1500 Dolls and shall draw to amount of 4000 Dollars on presumption the Statement is accurate

I shall also proceed to have the Grants and Deeds to you immediately registered in the County of Hyde and forward you the Deed with a platt of the Land if necessary also a Statement of the amt of Taxes on the whole which has now become due

Should there be any error in the Statement please advise me of the same, but if in the mean time any of my bills should come to hand for more than due please accept the same and provision shall be made for paying them when due

I am &c.

Jn^o. G Blount

David Allison to [John Gray Blount]

Phil.^a April 7th 1796

Dear Sir

I am without many of your favors latterly the last is of the 18 Ult^o.[,] from your great silence I am induced to think (from your own position) that your situation is more easy than some time past [,] at least if you was not at that period I hope you will be before the reception of this, as I have forwarded you a small supply, like the Widows mite all I had and much more. the first was a bill on Mr. Collins for 1500 \$ 26th Feby. The second was a bill on Mr. Collins 1st Ap.¹ for \$11 66/100 sent to Washington the third was 7000 \$ sent express to Hillsboro. to the Treasurer [,] all which I hope you are in possession of or will be by tomorrow night[;] when I shall send you any more I cant tell, but promise it as soon as I can and hope it will not be long first [sic] — Tomorrow I expect proposals for 1200 £ North Carolina debt⁹⁹ if they are even equal to *Crugors Bond*, I shall strike [i.e., give up] and send them on however you may disapprove of the sacrifice. I will also try at new York for as many as will compleat the land business as to me when I effect

⁹⁹ State bonds.

a sale of the Salvadore Tract which I bought with Judge Wilsons paper with that express View, for I am determined to get rid as soon as I possibly can of the business, I experience nothing but a series of Sickness sometimes in mind at others in Body, abuse abroad and Dunns of Creditors as well as chiding at home — I have one Consolation that if I do wrong it is the fault of the head and not of the heart

I am under no difficulty about any sales I have made as to the Green swamp[.] I only observed that I had believed there was surveyed for me a considerable part of that swamp & I had so said to the Judge for this I wished it purchased, lest he should make it a matter of dispute on closing the business and I have now sold it to [2] him at one dollar per acre payable @ 9.24 & 36 m°. the latter with Interest from the date.

If the Judges paper will not pass with you nor that of any land speculator in what manner do you propose that I shall pay you and your Company for the 500000 acres of lands sold me at 9^d. I never contemplated giving you mercantile or discountable paper or even Bank paper, at present I am sure I cant do either

Rhodes is with me — Very much of a Gentleman indeed! quite mild — I hope to settle with him tomorrow, I shall do this, that he may give G[eorge] O[gg]'s¹⁰⁰ story of me a Contradiction. he does not call on me for a settlement of the second contract but admits on my statement that on the lands being completed I am to account with you as agent for the Company.

Send me the Bounds of the lands for Gen^l [John] Willis¹⁰¹ and I will convey wi[th]* pleasure you may so assure him.

I have dispatches from London 18th. Jan^y. they do not savour so strong of Cash as I had contemplated yet I cant say I am much discouraged, I will bear my fate with patience and resignation expecting the reward of such meekness

Wishing you may return from Raleigh or Hillsboro. in better

¹⁰⁰ George Ogg remains an obscure figure. He was dabbling in land speculation as early as 1792 as agent for Blount. He joined the land company Rhodes was in, and like Rhodes seems to have been a timid partner who periodically underwent panic. Highly critical of Allison, he tried both to reform his partners and to sell his interest in the company. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*; David Allison to Blount, April 22, August 19, 1796, in this volume.

¹⁰¹ A lawyer, civil engineer, planter, and mill owner who founded the town of Lumberton. The land referred to here is probably that which he held as a member of the company and which he had been allowed to keep when John Gray Blount bought his interest in the company in 1795. Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, II, 84; Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 524-527.

* Illegible.

Humour than you set out and that you may long continue so is the Sincere wish of Sir

Your Ob^t Serv^t.
David Allison

P S. A letter of this day to Col^o [Thomas] Blount says Cap^t. Smith has sailed, that Mr. Strother is a passenger, therefore I presume I shall hear no more of *The Plates*.¹⁰² — I expect that is his errand.

James Maxwell to Abner Neale [with enclosure]

Washington 9th. April 1796

Sir

I am informed you want to Purchase a house & lott in this place if so I will Sell you mine[;] Inclosed is a Sketch of the property[.] my price will be £550 in money or two Negroe boys or fellows[.] a Small quantity of Lumber plank & Scantling for two Small houses with Nails & other materials would answer as well as money[,] the bal. Cash[.] the situation I need not describe as you are acquainted I suppose with it[;] I could give you possession in two months and a half after getting the Lumber or money but not before[.] You'll observe the house is not plaistered but all the Inside such as chair boards wash boards all the Doors made & hung and all the facings & the partitions run and one side of each [2] lathed with laths enough by me for all the house[.] I'll thank you to inform me what you think of the matter[.] In the meantime I remain with respect

Sir

Your m^o. obd^t: Servant
James Maxwell

Addressed: M^r Abner Neale
New Bern

[enclosure]

A House 28 by 18 feet two Story well framed & weather boarded with quatered plank the floors all quartered & Lower floor Secret

¹⁰² Plates for the printing of the map of North Carolina. David Allison to Blount, January 21, April 1, 1796, in this volume.

nailed[.] a Room below 18 ft. Sq^r. with a good fire place Six windows 18 lights each all lathed except over head[.] a passage 10 ft. by 18 with the Stair run up in it and a closet under Stair not lathed[.] two rooms above 9 by 12 a fire place in each & two Windows in each 12 lights — One room 10 by 12 ft. no fire place two Windows 12 lights[;] a passage across the house & to the head of Stairs 6 ft. with three Windows 12 Lights — a cloths press about 3 sq^r. on the floor & as much raised over the Stairs with a 12 light Window — A Kitchen with good chimney Strongly framed Weather boarded & floored 14 by 16[.] A very Strong Smoak house 10 by 12 [2] and a good garden Spott[.] the Lott is 52½ wide 440 feet deep and as good a place for a Wharf as any about Washington, deep close in[.] the chimney of the house is upon the line so that you may add 20 odd feet to the other end of the house — it is set about 2½ feet of[f] the ground and a wall built in front of the chimney so that a cellar may be built at any time without endangering the chimney[.] the outside doors are 6 pannels 4 lights over each inside door are all 4 pannels — the windows are all 8 by 10 glass — no garrets or garret floor —

David Allison to John Gray Blount

Philad.^a April 15.th 1796

Dear Sir

I hope long before this my express has arrived at Hillsboro. and given you a small relief as to the Entry takers.¹⁰³ I am here using every exertion to prepare for the great day in June and have hopes I shall proceed, but am determined never hereafter to count on any thing certain until I have it in hand — my prospects altho they do not proceed as I had contemplated yet I believe they will effect a large sum in Certificates perhaps nearly as many as are wanting. but on this make no positive promisses least we should fail.

I have no word of the *Bell* or her passenger¹⁰⁴ yet we had expected her before this from your letter.

No further Intelligence from Europe or how the Land scheme

¹⁰³ David Allison to Blount and Haywood, April 1, 1796, in this volume.

¹⁰⁴ The "Bell" was bringing John Strother (with a list of land grants) to Philadelphia. David Allison to Blount, April 22, 1796, in this volume; List of Grants, April 23, 1796, in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

is likely to succeed.¹⁰⁵ Mr Nicholson has made a very large sale at Hamburg from which I have hopes that success may crown the business, but I am not very sanguine

I am D^r Sir

Your

David Allison

PS I have settled with Rhodes
and paid him his dividend in
the first contract — he wished
to have the second but I told him
I knew no person but you in that
and could only settle with you unless
he had an Order]

Abner Neale to [John Gray Blount]

New Bern April 15.th 1796.

Dear Sir/.

I here inclose you a letter from Mr. Maxwell of your place, and if you are of Opinion that the purchase¹⁰⁶ will be advantageous by my Selling the following Negroes to pay for it, I will gladly do so. towit Hanah & boy Chole nearly two years Old, Monica about 10 y^{rs}. Old Jude about 8. and wish you or Major [Reading] Blount¹⁰⁷ to have my Cooper Fellow who can make him Work for I cant here, where his Wife is, this property I would willingly part with to get conveniently fixed at Washington. Mr. Boon retracted from his first proposials as he could not make the first payment down, and sooner than loose the Sale we made it 1. 2. & 3 year paym^t. with Interest on the first only tho he says if [2] I will discount Interest he expects to pay up the whole next March which I have Agreed to.

Pray can a small Vessell be procured with you to carry the Furniture &^c round If there can I will write you word when to send One, as M^{rs}. Neale and family must leave this before I set

¹⁰⁵ Allison and Blount had several agents in Europe to sell land. See David Allison to Blount, March 11, 1796; J. C. Mountfloreance to Blount, July 21, 1796, in this volume; Keith *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*.

¹⁰⁶ Of James Maxwell's house. See Maxwell to Neale, April 9, 1796, in this volume.

¹⁰⁷ Reading Blount (1757-1807) was the third son of Jacob Blount, Sr. He was a soldierly man whose grist and lumber mills were highly successful. For his biography see Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxiv-xxv; Samuel A. Ashe and Others (eds.), *Biographical History of North Carolina From Colonial Times to the Present* (Greensboro: Charles L. Van Noppen, 8 volumes, 1905-1917), I, 161-163, hereinafter cited as Ashe, *Biographical History*.

out for Wake [County] which will be the 25.th May as we must be there some days to arrange the business owing to the Courts not having met the two last Terms.—there will be considerable of Lumber &c to be Carried. — I am with Respect &c.

Abner Neale

Benjamin Atkinson to John Gray Blount

Bensborough April 18th 1796

Mr John G Blount

Dear Sir will thank you to inform me if Jaspers Brigantine has yet made her appearance[.] I think I and [Amos] Johnston will be hard run to make out the load for the Tuly[.] Should any more Tar offer for Sale than you want to ship yourself I will pay you 11 $\frac{1}{3}$ dollars cash on the Nail for all you can procure in good shipping order on Board of the Tuly as I am anxious to get as much Property as passibly can be shipped by that opp^y not expecting but what I shall loose by the Naval Stores but — Shall want more goods then I can pay for with the Small adventurer [adventure]¹⁰⁸ that will go in her — Pray Sir do you think Tob^o would pay freight from here I have cash I could advance for Tob^o. I understand the freight of [Van] Norden is to be paid him here it would have been more convenient unto me to have paid at Norfolk as my money is at Norfolk & they write is ready —

I much want my acc^t with you made out and what ever Balance appears in your favour the money is Ready[.] this I thought surely to have closed when I was last down had you been at home

Your Most Ob^t H^m Serv^t
Ben Atkinson

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r
Merchant
Washington

¹⁰⁸ A ship's cargo or part of a cargo shipped by a merchant on his own account as distinct from the rest of the cargo.

*David Allison to John Gray Blount*Phil^a April 22.nd 1796

Dear Sir

The Bell is arrived by which I received your letter of Introduction of M^r. Strother and to whom I will pay every attention in my power at your request even if my feelings did not prompt to do so but I think well of M^r. Strother he appears friendly and behaves prudently.

I have discarded Rhodes with his payment in full. I expect I shall have another visit from Ogg on his information however I pray not.

I have not yet seen the Grants forwarded by M^r Strother when I get them I will make a list and send you

I have no news, not even the rustling of *the Wind* but I hope this will not long continue, I have hopes of *rain* from the appearance of the *Heavens* which I pray God to grant speedily.¹⁰⁹ I am
D^r Sir yours

David Allison

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington
North Carolina

*Amos Johnston to John Gray Blount*Town Creek 25.th April 1796

Dear Sir

by the flat I have Sent Some Navil Stores to Ship on board Capt. Jasper for Liverpool I hope you will have them Coopered as usual and I will pay the Charges[.] if any Molasses has come in please to send me a hogshead. if Capt. Jasper is Ready to take in before I see you please to place the load in the following manner 300 Bl.^{ls} tar 100 Pitch & 100 turpentin the turpentine will Come Down next load which will be a bout the 8th next month

I am Dear Sir yr^s &C
Amos Johnston

¹⁰⁹ A reference to Allison's hopes for financial relief from debts contracted in land speculation.

NB youl Receive 50 barrels of pork which I want Ship^d to Norfolk to the address of Mr. Ashley as the other was[;] pray send all the pork by the first oppertunity

A J

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r.
Washington

Robert Ponton to John Gray Blount

[Halifax, 25th April 1796]

Sir,

Understanding that you employ several vessels in the West India trade, am extremely desirous to be employed during the absence of my Brother ——

I commenced the marine life early in the year 1788 in the St. Petersburg Trade—have navigated in the West India Trade about four years (also) in the Streights, and East India line for a considerable number of voyages—provided you, or any of your Friends are in want of an officer, to make a trip for the West Indies you'll infinitely oblige me by affording me what information lais in your power —

I have the honor to be

Sir,

Yours Most Obed.^y

Robert Ponton

Halifax
25.th April
1796

Addressed: John G. — Blount Esq^r.
Washington
Tar River ——

Abner Neale to [John Gray Blount]

New Bern April 27th 1796.——

Dear Sir/.

By Captⁿ. William Banks you will Receive a part of my Furniture such as I think may be necessary to keep House, agreeable

to the enclosed Memorandum, tho you will find many other things on board that there is no mention made of they being the[re]—Negroes and some small Articles which were sent on board in the hurry of pack^s. up, however I am told the Man has an Honest Character, and will deliver you all that he has on board, — I wish you to receive them and have them so disposed of as to be ready for M^{rs} Neale when she comes over which will be early next week, — I must also request of you to pay him the Freight being Twenty Dollars; which Sum I will Account with you for; — I could wish a House taken for M^{rs} Neale and family if possible, as it will not be in my power to be at Washington untill after the Court at Raleigh and I wish her to be properly accomated before that time: as to the Negroes which I send over I beg you will put them to soman thing [something] [2] to save expense at any rate, if possible; of this you will be the best Judge; I am much pushed for time about getting the Dockets ready for the Court: but am in hopes I can come over with M^{rs}. Neale to see her safe once more to the place I brot her from, and where she wishes to return to; tho' I cant stay more than one Night there, this time; — I wished to send round a considerable Quantity of Leather but this Boat could not take it therefore must leave it untill some other oportunity. —

I am yours &c.

Abner Neale

We Sincerely thank Sukey¹¹⁰
for her Offer and gladly accept of it

David Allison to John Gray Blount

Phil.^a April 29th 1796

Dear Sir

I have nothing new to say to you on anything I am still busy, fearing the last day,¹¹¹ and hope to forward you by express or post next week a small sum in Certificates how many I cant now say but I expect from twenty to forty thousand dollars[.] the balance I cant give you much Comfort about but will try to the

¹¹⁰ Susannah (Mrs. Augustus) Harvey, who after Augustus Harvey's death married Jacob Blount. She lived at Washington, North Carolina. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxviii; Jacob Blount to Mrs. Susannah Harvey, June 26, 1798, in this volume.

¹¹¹ Possibly a deadline in his contract with Wilson.

last and perhaps I may by some sorce put get them to the Treasury to save a lapse —

I expect you have letters before this will reach you from the Treasurer telling you the fate of the Entry Takers for whom you was bound if not I tell you Judgements are suspended on account of seven thousand dollars in Bank bills deposited there sent by Express

I have not heard from you for a long time whether dead or alive — I wrote you some [2] time past respecting Mr [Robert] Smethey who went to your State to engage Lumber for the Federal City — he has not been heard from since he sailed, his wife is in great distress to hear of him[;] his Child is dead since he left us — if he is in your neighbourhood or you have heard of him pray drop a line to me on that Subject.

I am Sir

Yours &C

David Allison

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr.

Washington

Nº. Carolina

George Ogg to John Gray Blount

[May n.d., 1796]

Necessity has no Law.

This is realy my case,¹¹² therefore must do Some thing & what it is to be I know not without your assistance & altho I Conceive that I make a Sacrafice when I make the following proposals to you, still I deem it more prudent than to remain idle & in debt[.] If there fore the means are possibly in your reach I shall consider it a favor, I have in the contract with Morris 50,000

Dollrs

acres	4666..
Dº. with Willson ... 50,000 30 Cents	12,500
Holly Shiller ... 10665 — 100 Dº	10665.
	<u>27831</u>
Deduct for State Bounty	4000
	<u>23831</u>
	Dollrs

¹¹² Ogg was selling his interest in the company. See Introduction; David Allison to Blount, April 7, 1796, n.100, in this volume.

I will take in Land 1000.

Pay Mr. Schenk 500

11915 Dollrs.

Pay in Oct^o. ——— 1000.

2500

2500

9415 Dollrs.

pay in 6 years w^t. Int. ———

I am Sir yrs &c.

Geo. Ogg

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r

Present —

John Gray Blount to William C. Lake

Washington May 6th 1796

Mr. William C. Lake

Sir¹¹³

Here with you will receive our account against the underwriters on the Brigantine Russell for repairs on her arrival from Liverpool in April 1795 which has not been sooner sent, for want of a direct opportunity.

As it is the first we ever had to call on underwriters, although we have been owners of vessells this Nineteen Years, We are at a loss whether the papers sent may be all that are Necessary. The [2] Protest we before sent with the account respecting the Goods damaged and should there be any charges not warranted by the protest you will not insist on them but settle for such as is not disputed.

You will please receive of the underwriters on the Goods and on the Vessell and place the Same to our Credit, as we are Without your acct. [of] Sales of the Tuleys last Cargo and Your acct we are at a loss to judge how our accounts stand, But as we are about to send the Tuley to Liverpool as soon as she arrives from Jaimaica which is daily expected, by which we shall place in your hands about thousand Pounds exclusive of the expenses of the Vessell, we have forwarded the inclosed memorandum for Goods which we wish provided against the arrival of the Tuley that She may have no detention there, She will

¹¹³ From the Letter Book.

not need graving¹¹⁴ and therefore will [be] ready to take in as soon as discharged.

Should there be a probability that Salt will be scarce please engage 150 tons as that will probably pay a pretty good freight, Mr. [Amos] Johnston [3] & [Ben] Atkinson will ship in the Tuley about 1500 Bbls of Navall Stores to Your address.

Their order will be forwarded by the Brig Carolina which they are now loading to Gilchrist & Barry to whom we will not permitt them to Ship in our Vessells, but we have no reason to suppose them displeased with Your Conduct

We are with much esteem
Your Most ob^t. Hum^l. Ser^{ts}.
John G & Tho Blount

F. X. Martin to [John Gray Blount]

[Newbern May 6, 1796]

Sir,

Mr Petit, a french gentleman, whom I much wish to oblige shewed me just now a couple of notes of Mr. Leroy & Mr. Hanrahan, desiring my opinion whether they were properly Drawn — he not being well acquainted with the language & mode of doing business here & the Sum being Considerable.

I find that the notes are rather irregularly executed, being *Sealed* by one of the parties & only *Subscribed* by the other, & there being *No* witness. I advised Mr Petit to get the Notes drawn over & Signed only. He observes to me that Mr. Leroy's desire may be frustrated if the bills which he expects do not go by this mail

In order to have Mr Leroy accomodated & Mr. Petit Secure I have advised Mr Petit to Send to a person in whom dependance may be placed the bill Mr Leroy wishes[,] to be delivered to Mr Leroy as soon as he executes two common promissory notes unsealed with Mr Hanrahan as a Security — which note will be exchanged afterwards for those N^s. Mr Leroy sent by this mail

Mr Petit having no other acquaintance in Washington but God Almighty desires me to precure some Worldly friend who may serve him & Mr Leroy. The last gentleman having been once

¹¹⁴ The process of removing the barnacles from a wooden hull and coating it with pitch.

recommended to me by you I have imagined you would not refuse your friendly assistance.

the bill is inclosed — pray see M^r Leroy & M^r. Hanrahans joint notes are p^{b^{le}}. on the 6th. of Sept^r. & the other on the 6th. of November next for three hundred & seventy five pounds N. C. Currency — each & let [?] M^r. Leroy have the drafts & keep the notes till those which M^r Leroy Sent are given up in exchange.

If M^r. Leroy does not agree to this M^r. Petit wishes the draft may be sent back & he will return the notes M^r Leroy sent him M^r. Petit sends a note to be delivered to M^r Leroy.

I'm Sir

Yo most obed. Serv

F. X Martin

I've taken up the drafts of M^r Ellis & M^r Whiting —

Newbern May 6th 1796

Edward Jones¹¹⁵ to John Gray Blount

Fayetteville May 6th 1796

Dear Sir

Detained here a few hours after the Court closed I by accident see on a suspicious corner of the court house an advertisement of this date setting forth that all the Lands of John Gray Blount entered in the County of Rob[e]*son are to be sold for taxes on the first Monday in July next the sale to continue till all are sold signed by the Sheriff[.] If you have [seen] this notice before, you only lose the postage[;] if you have not it may be of service which will grafitly —————

Yours with respect

Ed Jones

Addressed: John Gray Blount esq^r.

Washington

N^o. Carolina

¹¹⁵ Edward Jones, of Wilmington, North Carolina, was a member of the House of Commons, 1788-1791. He was solicitor general of North Carolina from 1792 to 1827, and was a close friend of the Blounts, as the present letter indicates. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 101; Edward Jones to Richard Blackledge, October 10, 1796, in this volume.

* Manuscript defaced.

*Jacob Rhodes to John Gray Blount*Lumberton May 6th 1796

Sir

Not Wishing to pay a Tax for the Entrees I made in Bladen (& your not coming forward to pay the Bounty to the State as Soon as I expected) have ordered Mr. Singletary to Strike them all off However he has omitted One hundred entrees — If it is your wish or intention to take them into the Company concur You Will please to let me know immediately otherwise I Shall not consider myself bound to Hold them for you any longer —

Mr. David Allison of Philadelphia has Settled With me agreeable to the Order of Maj^r. Ogg (which I Shew to you at Raleigh) and One hundred & Sixty nine Dollars which is to be allowed you in our settlement in the Sales of the Land — There was Some little misunderstanding between me & him respecting Mr. Atkins which I pursume was occationed by a misrepresentation —

I am informed that our lands Sold at 4/p^r Acre, by others a 3/9 & by Mr. Allison [2] twenty five cents[;] either of these sum are different from what you Signified to me — Therefore in order to be upon a Certainty I take the Liberty to request the favour of you to let me know what sum you have in contemplation to Settle with me at. also when you expect to be ready to close that business

I have wrote to you twice or three but rec^d. no answer —

I lodged your acc^t. for my surveying fees with Mr. Rob^t Donaldson in Fayette¹¹⁶ which I hope you will immedeately discharge otherwise there will be a Suit commensed ag^t. me Which undoubtedly you will not be so ungenerous as to Suffer whe[n] y[ou] will know a great part was [?] money advanced out of my pockett as will appear by the —* of the Acc^t. under the Signiture of your agent Mr. Blackledge —

If it is convenient & agreeable to you to purchase my interest in the Land business let me know & I will make you a proposition I am

Your Humb^e. Srv^t.

J Rhodes

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington

P Post

¹¹⁶ A "Robert Donaldson and Co." of Fayetteville, Cumberland County, is listed in "Census 1790," in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 463.

* Illegible.

*David Allison to John Gray Blount*Philad^a. May 6th. 1796

Dear Sir

I am still struggling against the adverse waves fearing the coming of June which really approaches too rapidly for my perfect convenience "sufficient for the day is the Evil thereof[.]" I will not therefore despair until I have no more than time to send an Express to Raleigh and I keep one ready at an hour on whom you may count seeing time enough to save us from sinking, he will bear orders for Gracie & Andersons Certificates and Hartshorne & Lindleys about forty thousand dollars and I flatter myself about twenty thousand in Cash[.] whether this will discharge our debt or not I cant say but it will be the amount I can do if I get more you may be satisfied that I will be certain to clear you from your troubles [2] which are not greater than mine altho I have learned to bear misfortunes better than you — As such a June would represent to you a Grand *Jubilee* I hope you will spend the last week in May at Raleigh for I swear I will clear you on that Week from Pecuniary troubles in North Carolina — am I ever to expect another Letter from you or may I ask why you have not written to me for so long

Yours &C.

David Allison

John G Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
 Washington
 N^o. Carolina

*John Gray Blount to Peter Schermerhorn*Washington May 13th 1796D Sir¹¹⁷

This will be delivered to you by Captain Smith by whom I send a Kegg of Potters Clay or Fullers Earth of which there is in the neighborhood of this place an abundance on a piece of Land now for sale and as the value of the Land much depends

¹¹⁷ From the Letter Book.

on the Value of this Clay, I have taken the liberty of troubling you with the inquiry, Whether it is of such quality as to make it Valuable, please to enquire what the Clay is fit for and what worth per Ton del^d. in New York[.] Should it not answer to send there in time of peace when freight is low, it may answer to set up a Pottery here, or it may answer as Paint or Manure of all which I presume a Potter is bettern than any other man [to ask.] Your answer as speedily as posible Will much oblige me

I have not heard from you since drawing in favor of Mr. Schenck¹¹⁸ for 800 Dollars[.] should there not sufficient of our Funds in your hands to take up that draft please use of Mr. Johnstons money to make up the deficiency and inform me that I may pay him here [2] the great fall of navall Stores at your place prevents more being sent from this for some time —

A few days ago I was unfortunate enough to have the Cap of my Turpentine still burst nearly up[.] I have sent the remains of it by Cap^t. Smith and shall be much obliged by your having a new one made of the same dimentions and sent by the first Vessell to Occacock to be left with John Wallace¹¹⁹ at the Castle and let the freight to that place be no obstacle to the sending [of] it as one days loss of it will be more than any freight will be asked for the delivery of it there, The same reasons will urge the Necessity of the Coppersmiths making dispatch so as to embrace the first opportunity to Occacock

I am with much esteem

Yours &c.

J. G. Blount

Mr. Peter Schermerhorn
New York

¹¹⁸ John G. L. Schenck, a native Russian who was a well-known merchant in Tarboro and served for a time as Blount agent in Philadelphia, where he died on October 6, 1806. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 209, n.64; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, October 27, 1806.

¹¹⁹ John Wallace was operator and joint owner with the Blounts of a mercantile store, warehouse, and lightering operation at Shell Castle, on Shell Island near Ocracoke Inlet. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*; Thomas to John Gray Blount, December 14, 1797, n.150, in this volume.

John Gray Blount to Jacob Rhodes

Washington May 17th 1796

Mr. Jacob Rhodes

Lumberton

Sir¹²⁰

Yours of the 6th Int came to hand this post and I have attended to the several subjects it contains

I am perfectly satisfied that the Entries are Struck off the Entry Book as I doubt whether they ever could have been surveyed in such manner as to enable me to procure Grants, And if I Could perhaps it might have been on other lands already granted me

As to the representation which had been made to Mr. Allison respecting Atkins I know nothing, Mr Blackledge who was the agent of Mr. Allison gave him I suppose the necessary information and I understood purchased of Atkins all his right in that Speculation —

You say you are informed our Land sold at 4/ — by others 3/9 and by Mr. Atkins 25 Cents, and from what follows I suppose you mean the Lands entered by Porterfield myself & others of which you were one, and if so you cannot be at a loss to know what they were sold at by me and that by the consent of Col^o Porterfield [2] with whom and whom only I was to consult, The price I understood was made known to all concernd and by all approved that was 9^a P.C per acre at 1. 2. 3. & 4 years and at that I expect to settle as soon as the business can be so completed as to enable me to do so.

What Mr. Allison sold at I am ignorant but have heard different prices

You wish to know when I will Settle your account for surveying, I answer, that when that when [sic] you will have the Bladen Lands (which was surveyed by Persons procured by yourself as I have understood) connected so as to show the loss by running on each other and will make good that deficiency I will pay the Ballance that shall be due

I believe I am an answer to one of your Letters in debt, and you are in debted the information respecting the connection of the Bladen Lands.

I have no inclination to purchase your or any other Persons

¹²⁰ From the Letter Book.

share, in any Lands at a higher price than I have before given, and until we have got the matter settled it is incumbent on all concerned to see that that no part is sold for the Taxes as we are bound by the [3] Sale for so many acres clear of incumbrance & the Taxes due before we convey is an incumbrance

I am about to lodge money at the Treasury to pay the Taxes and have so wrote the sherriff, Will you know of him if that will due and inform me as soon as possible.

I am

Yours &c.

J G Blount

F. X. Martin to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

Newbern May 21, 1796

Dr Sir,

Mr Petit desires you w^d send the two notes you kindly undertook to obtain from Mr. Leroy.¹²¹ The first note[s] are inclosed to be given up.

Mr Leroy wishes to hire a negro of Mr Petit's that is in your place, inclosed is a small note of the terms on which he may have the negro.

Mr. Arnett who is coming this way will afford you a proper opportunity of sending Mr Leroy's note & the inclosed agreement after its syned —

I'm sorry I plague you so much, but the desire of oblgng my friend will perhaps plead my apology.

I'm your mo. obed serv^t —

F. X. Martin

Mr W^m. Blount, wrote me from Raleigh he would make some arrangements to Convey me a small sum of money which he owes me — did he say any thing *to you* about it —

Addressed: Jn^o G. Blount, Esq.

Washington

[enclosure]

\$750

We promise to pay to Mr Ignace Petit or order the Sum of

¹²¹ See F. X. Martin to Blount, May 6, 1796, in this volume.

Seven hundred and fifty dollars on the Sixth day of november next, for value received of him Washington May the 6, 1796

—————* Leroy Jr [Seal]

Walter Hanrahan

\$750

We promise to pay to Mr Ignace Petit or order the sum of Seven hundred and fifty dollars on the Sixth day of September next, for value received of him, Washington May the 6 1796

Ls[?] Leroy Jr [Seal]

John and Joseph Mitchell¹²² to John Gray Blount

[George?] Town. Potomuck 23^d May 96

Sir —

Your Lett^r of the 27th Dec.^r last to John Mitchell did not arrive to Hand untill ye 10^t. Inst^t. This retard has being in consequence of the Death of the Post Master in the City or this apparant Negligence would not have taken place

We are sorry to inform You that the Price of Shingles as well as other Lumber are at this moment low, the demand very trifling, as private adventurers have been for some time past totally Idle — few Buildings going forward in Consequence of the uncertainty of y^e Loan that was pending in Congress for y^e Improvement of the City — It is very probable as this Money is granted¹²³ that things may again be in a more flourishing Condition than they have been for some Months past — There are besides a Num[2]ber of Shingles & Lumber ar[t]icles that have poured in upon Us from y^r State & other places that have assisted to affect the present prices — We have no doubt however but a demand for these articles will very soon take place & in consequence prices will mend

The Building Stone Ship'd in Cap^{tn} Alderson¹²⁴ [’s vessel] is

* Illegible abbreviation of first name.

¹²² Merchants of Washington City. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 615; Letter Book, *passim*.

¹²³ After a long debate, Congress, on March 31, 1796, passed a bill providing for a loan of \$300,000 to the builders to speed work on the new capitol. *Annals of Congress*, Fourth Congress, First Session, 1795-1796 (Washington, D. C.: 42 volumes, 1834-1856), V, 840, hereinafter cited as *Annals of Congress*, followed by number, session, years, volume, and page.

¹²⁴ Probably John Alderson, a prominent shipper and planter of Hyde County. There was also a Captain Simon Alderson in Hyde County who was a prominent planter, but this reference is probably to John, who had considerable shipping interests and who was trading with the construction site of the capitol in late 1795. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 121, 615; Clark, *State Records*, XXI, 640, 641; Wheeler, *Sketches*, I, 80; *North Carolina Gazette*, (New Bern), December 31, 1796; Letter Book, *passim*.

Supposed to be of the best Quality & We hope it will meet yr approbation & Expectations, but not being certain of that have charged Cap^{tn} Alderson no Commission —

The Prices of Provision here is full as high as yr Quotation

Any Business You may have to Transact in this Place if under our Direction, be assured attention will be paid to yr Interest by Sr Your Ob^t Serv^{ts}

Jn^o & Joseph Mitchell

Addressed: To

Jn^o. Blount Esqr

Washington

NCarolina

p Cap^{tn} Alderson —

David Allison to John Gray Blount

Phil^a. May 27th. 1796

Dear Sir

M^r William Blount is with us but am afraid he will not get a Seat this Session¹²⁵ for which I am sorry — On tomorrow I send my express to Raleigh where I wish M^r Blackledge to attend. — I do not exactly know the amount which will be sent but it will be considerable[,] I hope enough or nearly so to extricate us at the Treasury¹²⁶ — every exertion is making that the balance may be in our favor which I really wish as it will give you so much pleasure to torment your Enemies — I will write you by the Express I am Yours &C

David Allison

Please send me the conveyances of the Tyrrel land — they shall not be used without *real Necessity* —

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington
N^o. Carolina

¹²⁵ William Blount was waiting to take his Senate seat upon Tennessee's admission to the Union. However, fearing the State's anti-administration sentiments in the coming presidential election, Federalists in Congress refused to seat the State's representatives or senators until the following session. Masterson, *William Blount*, 292-296.

¹²⁶ The Blounts and Allison were again in debt at the North Carolina treasury, this time for a large sum of which Allison was to raise less than half. William Blount to John Haywood, May 28, 1796, in this volume.

*William Blount to John Haywood with note
by John Gray Blount*¹²⁷

Philadelphia May 28th 1796

Dear Sir/.

It appears that John Gray Blount is answerable for the Entry of lands payable on or before the eighth day of June or be compelled to reenter, to the amount of twenty five thousands pounds or thereabout, in part of which David Allison forwards by this Conveyance to Richard Blackledge about nine thousand pounds; The Balance is secured and will be in hand in the Course of ten days.

If you can venture to acknowledge the receipt of the whole amount to Mr. Blackledge I pledge you my word and honor it shall be paid you at the Treasury on or before the 15th. July.¹²⁸

Arrangements for obtaining these Certificates are certain and I expect the possession of them in three or four [2] days from this time.

The persons acquainted with the Contents of this letter are David Allison and Richard Blackledge parties concerned and at the hands of the latter you will receive it.

If you cannot acknowledge the Receipt of the Certificates as above mentioned the disadvantages of nonpayment must be submitted to.

I am with great respect & Esteem
Dr. Sir

Your Obedient Servant
W^m. Blount

John Haywood Esquire
Treasurer of N^o Carolina

Addressed: John Haywood Esquire
Treasurer of North Carolina
Raleigh

[note by John Gray Blount on the right side of the letter]

The expense of inconvenience of reentering is nothing but I have already paid the Surveyor of the County 1200 doll^s. for a

¹²⁷ From the Haywood Papers.

¹²⁸ This letter indicates the favors asked and probably occasionally received of John Haywood, State Treasurer.

deputation to survey the Lands enter'd at the time of such payment in my name

If I have to reenter he may subject me again to the payment of 2000 Doll^s. or more

I have no doubt but the Certificates are engaged but if not W[illiam]. B[lount]. has sold lands to Am^t. of 45 m Dollars payable at 3 & 6 m^o. out of which the payments shall be made[.] even if it could not be made out of the lands but as soon as the grants can be procured there is no doubt they can be sold & immediate payment rec^d. to Am^t. of more than the purchase mony

Jacob Rhodes to John Gray Blount

Lumberton June 2nd. 1796

Sir

Yours of the 8th Feb^y. & 17th. of May respecting the Bladen lands are both at hand — On the reception of the former I Sent it [to] M. Singletary With the plotts & requested him to have the remainder of the Surveys connected Which he Omitted — On the question of the latter I appli,d to Mess^{rs}. Jones & Bryan they both say that the Survey made by Bryan of 17660 Acres is plas,d Wrong in it beg[innin]^g ab^t. 5 mile distance & that that survey When rightly connected Will not interfere with any other lands — They will not resurvey & connect those lands themselves but they both say that if you will send a person to do it they will Wate on him at any time & Shew all the Beginnings

I cold have employd a person at a moderate price to have entered immediately on the business but cannot (In Justice to my self) advance any more money on your acc^t. —

I do not well understand your meaning in your letters on this Subject in the former you mention,d that the land must be Sought for else where in the latter that I must make good that deficiency — I do not know with what propriety you can say that I must make good that deficiency — I employd those gentlemen to Survey your land which they were to do [2] on _____* ground I paid them there fees agreeable to Contract (Which is more than you have done to me)

You also Say I cold not be at a loss to know what Sum you

* Manuscript Torn.

war to Settle with me at in the Sales of the land For my part I do not know how I could have been otherwise than at a loss when I had Learn from credeble authority that our land had Sold much higher than you had Signified to us & I well know that it was our agreement to have One half of the Real proceeds agreeable to the Sales & if any person or persons concern,d agree,d to take 90 P. C. or that it was in Contemplation for any person to have less than his proportion agreeable to the Sales it is more than I can lear[n] or know of —

I have not had it in my power to see the sheriff of this county but understand he & several other sheriffs of the neighboring Counties are determined to sell your land for the Taxes as Spedily as possable[.] they have long advertised those lands but as to the time of Sales I do not re colect —

Seeing So many defeculties in this business indu[ces] * me to wish to be done with it — Therefore if you will give me Fifteen hundred pounds within one month from the date hereof — You Shall have the whole of my interest in the Concern (including your acct.) which would be making a Sacrifise of some thousands of Dollars which I am well [3] assured that I am Justly intitled to —

I remain Sir your Ob^t.
& very Humb^e Serv^t.
J Rhodes

Addressed: John G Blount Esquire
Washington
P Post

Henry Tuley to John Gray Blount

Bells Bay¹²⁹ June 16th 1796 —

Dear Sir

The time is out you rote me if the vessel was not Launchd you card not when — Since I rote you it has ben all most continnu-ally Raining their has not ben eight days work maid on hur since you cant see nor hear —————* day and think I have

¹²⁹ On the Pungo River. Slades Creek, east of the river, was the location of earlier work on the "Grampus." See Henry Tuley to Blount, March 3, 1796, in this volume. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, map opposite 454.

* Illegible word.

neglected my busines but it is not the case[.] where I am under oblegation with any man always make sure of my one best indeavour to comply but if God and the Devil is to prevent it must [be] so I sopose[.] the[y] air the strongest powers — I have got the deck laid and two thirds Calked up to the Bends and can have all the Carpentors work dun fit to launch by the time the Calkin is dun and will hurry all I Can — we have no co[a]l onely what we burn — I am your humble st —

Henry Tuley

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr
Washington

John Gray Blount to Robert Smithey

Washington June 17th 1796

Mr. Rob^t. Smithey

Sir¹³⁰

I am sorry the Shingles do not answer and that a dispute took place between you & partner respecting the contract and surprised at his observation that he would sell the cargo for my acct. But your conduct has been such that you shall have no cause to complain of my generosity if you dispatch Cap^t. Sabins with the Corn agreeable to Contract.¹³¹

I shall send no more Shingles or Plank until I hear from you, and as the Shingles are a loss and the Lumber not much profit, I am willing to let you off the contract except such part as is already delivered.

Please write me by return of Post

Yours &c.

Jn^o. G Blount

¹³⁰ From the Letter Book.

¹³¹ Robert Smithey and a Mr. Budden contracted in April or May to purchase shingles and lumber from Blount, who would deliver them to the site of Washington, D. C. in return for a cargo of corn (at one dollar per bushel) sent on the Blount vessels. Blount was a middleman in this transaction, as the shingles and lumber came from merchant and ship-owner Van Noorden, and the corn was to be delivered to him. Smithey and Budden dissolved their partnership in June, the shingles proved unsalable at the construction site, and Smithey was unable to procure corn to meet his contract. Blount, pressed for the corn by Van Noorden, wrote Smithey demanding that he honor the contract and drew on him for cash for the corn. Smithey was unable to meet this note. Blount to Smithey, June 17, July 24, 1796, in this volume; Letter Book, *passim*.

*Mary Fitzgerald*¹³² to [Henry Williamson, with enclosure]

Charles Street
St Jamse's Square
June 24th. (96)

Dear Uncle:

I received your Letter dated October 12th. (95) by the Hands of Mr. William Murdock,¹³³ & have the pleasure to acquaint you with the following particulars, relative to the Monies bequeathed you by the Marriage Settlement, of my late Dear Father & Mother

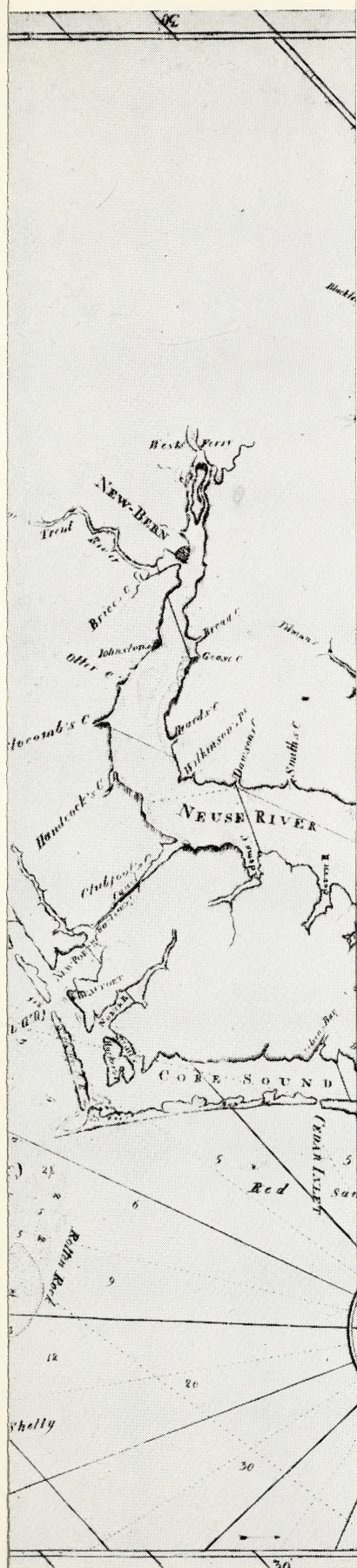
The power of Attorney you Sent to me, not being made to the forms of Law, was not Sufficient — I therefore now Send to you two other *Powers*, in favor of M^r. W^m. Murdock, the Gentleman Recommended to You[;] the *one*, is for £112 .. 10 Sterling, being one fourth of £450 Cash, in the Bank of England and the other is for £500 New South Sea Annuities¹³⁴ [2] which will now fetch about £320 — (being one fourth of £2000 New South Sea Annuities) placed with the South Sea Company, pursuant to the Marriage Settlement, of my late dear Father & Mother, & which you are become entitled unto, as one of the only Brothers Now claiming — When this Money comes to your Hands, you'll be pleased to inform me thereof—That I may make you another Remittance through the Same Channel, or Such a[s] you think proper, which I shall be happy & I hope enabled to do; as these Matters are under the direction of the Court of Chancery, and by that time I believe will be determin'd — The other Money (whatever it may be, after the deduction of Law Charges) will be encreased by the Interest to accrue thereon— And I Hope [3] the Times, will improve the Principal.

If You think it Advisable, to have it placed in American-Stock, instead of the English Funds, I will Endeavor to get it

¹³² Niece of a Mr. Bargeau, who was supposedly an heir of her parents. He lived at Mattamuskeet under the assumed name of Williamson and was a debtor of John Gray Blount. For the complicated story, see Letter Book, *passim*; Blount to William Murdock, March 18, 1796; Parnell to William Murdock, June 24, 1796; Murdock to Blount, June 27, 1796; and Henry Williamson to Blount, September 12, 1797, in this volume; Williamson power of attorney, February 10, 1796, in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume; and Williamson to Blount, April 24, 1797, in this volume.

¹³³ For Murdock, see Blount to William Murdock, March 18, 1796, in this volume.

¹³⁴ In 1719 and early 1720 the notorious South Sea Bubble was formed by the purchase, for more than £7,000,000, of the national debt of England by the South Sea Company. The debt was largely in the form of annuities (guarantees of fixed annual income from the British government in return for a loan), and the South Sea Company planned to redeem these annuities with inflated South Sea Company stock, later termed South Sea annuities. *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Cambridge, England: University Press [Eleventh Edition], 29 volumes, 1911), XI, 515, hereinafter cited as *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Eleventh Ed.)



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done; as its my Wish, you Sh^d have the Interest for your Support, without any difficulties.

The Court, has not as as [*sic*] yet Settled how, & to Whom, the remaining £150 Ann^s. & Cash, are to be paid — but when they have, I will get the Necessary Powers of Attorney forwarded to you. — As Soon as this Money reaches your Hands, beg you'll give me immediate Information—and with my sincere Wishes for yourself, & Familys Welfare, I remain

Dear Uncle

Your Affectionate Niece

Mary Fitz Gerald

[*enclosure*]

Parnell to William Murdock

Spitalf[iel]^d [London] 24 June 1796

M^r Parnells Complts to M^r. Murdock — hath taken the Liberty of enclosing to him two Powers of Attorney and Duplicates to forward to M^r Williamson¹³⁵ and to request he will give special Directions that they are executed according to the forms of Law here on account of M^r. Bargeau's assuming that Name since his residence in America and that there may not be any further Difficultys occur as to your receiving this Money for him — M^{rs}. FitzGerald begs Leave to trouble you to send there with her letters and Duplicate to her Uncle, considering herself very — much obliged for your Assistance on this Occasion and hopes that if any thing unpleasant should occur from the Signatures of his real Name M^r Murdock will be so kind as to represent to whom necessary that there was not [any b]*ad Intention on the Part of M^r. Bargeau [for taking]* upon himself another name.

P.S. When the Powers &c come back & M^r. Murdock receives any further Information from America respecting this Business P. hopes to have the pleasure of hearing from him thereon.

Addressed: M^r Murdock

¹³⁵ See Mary Fitzgerald to [Henry Williamson], June 24, 1796, in this volume.

* Manuscript torn.

John Gray Blount to Thomas Smith

Washington June 25th 1796

Capt. Thomas Smith¹³⁶

Proceed with the Russell with all possible dispatch and Safety to the Mole St. Nichola when you will not only enquire the markets of that place but of Kingston and Port. au Prince and should you be able to obtain the prices at foot and [with] dispatch I would advise your selling there unless you should be informed the markets are much better at one or other of the above mentioned places in which case you will go to that which promises the best Voyage —

If you sell at the Mole or Port au Prince you will not be able to procure any produce therefore endeavour to beat up to Turks Island and load with Salt and proceed home, If you go to Kingston deliver the letter herewith to Mr. Lake who will sell your Cargo and procure a freight to either N York or [or] Phila to which place you will proceed if he does and deliver your Cargo agreeable to his directions and if [you] receive no further order from me come directly home with good stone ballast for building which [2] I want at this place

Should Mr. Lake not be able to procure freight, he will either vest the nett proceeds of the Russell in produce and send her home, or purchase as many Negroes as will procure her admission into the Havanna and as many Molasses Hh^{ds}. as when filled will ballast her. If that should be the case have the hh^{ds}. filled with water to save time and expence in ballasting and consult Mr. Lake in what manner you had best treat the Negroes and govern yourself by his advice and proceed to the Havanna and deliver the letter herewith to Mr Simon Poey¹³⁷ who if there will sell the Negroes and procure Molasses to the amount of the Negroes and Cash you will have, he will probably advance as much as will load you with molasses and take your Bills on JG & Tho Blount for the amount which we wish you to draw for provided Molasses can be had at one fourth of a Dollar per Gallon and then you will proceed to Phil^a. and value on Mr D Allison my friend there, but if he does not advance more than the [3] amt. of Negroes and Cash you will come directly home with the Brig, Should Mr. Poey not be there or decline doing your business

¹³⁶ From the Letter Book.

¹³⁷ A merchant of Havana with whom the Blounts did considerable business. Letter Book, *passim*.

you can sell the negroes Your Self & purchase Molasses and proceed home If you sell at Port au Prince and can find a Mooring anchor of about 1500^b. to be sold at _____ *tt with a chain &c. fitted [,] purchase and [bring]* home

I shall rest satisfied you will do the best you possibly can, write me often what your prospects are

Yours &c.

J G Blount

The prices which you may sell at the Mole are

Herrings 8 Dlls

Lumber round 30 Dlls

Shingles 8 Dlls

P. S. Since writing the above Cap^t. [John] Smith 19 days from Port au Prince and so says Gillis's letters that Top Timber is 60 Dr^s. Scantling and Boards 50 Shingles 12 Drs. therefore proceed directly to [4] that port unless you should hear any thing to deter you from going and in that case you will follow the directions in this letter but if you can proceed to port au Prince, follow my directions in a letter of 26th June herewith

J G Blount

John Gray and Thomas Blount to Richard Lake

Washington June 25th 1796

Mr. Richard Lake

Sir¹³⁸

The Brig Russell Thomas Smith master is loaded agreeable to Invoice herewith and to your address, please dispose of her Cargo to best advantage and if possible procure a freight to New York or Phil^a. if 800 Dollars or more can be obtained and leave to take in produce for the Nett proceeds of our own Cargo and Ship the Nett proceeds in Rum, Sugar or Coffee as you are advised will answer best, if to New York to address to Mr. Peter Schermerhorn if to Philad^a. to Mr. David Allison, but if freight Cannot be obtained and the Sales of the Russell Should Nett 3500 Dlls purchase as many Negros immediately from the Coast as will procure the Brig admittance into the Havanna

* Illegible.

¹³⁸ From the Letter Book.

and one hundred Molasses Hh^{ds}. which filled with water will put the Brig in a set of Ballast and dispatch Cap^t. Smith for the Havanna to the address of [2] Simon Poey Esquire with such directions as you may deem proper [for] the health and safety of the Negroes

If the Cargo should not N^t. 3500 Dollars and freight cannot be had as before mentioned send her immediately back to this place with 4Hh^{ds}. Sugar of second quality four hhd^s of better sort, 1000^w. Coffee if 18 Dlls per C^t. or under[,] 2 Hh^{ds}. Rum 100^w. Ginger and the ballance in Cash. In all cases dispatch is of great importance with our small cargoes, please advise of the arrival of the Russell and her prospects.

We are &^c.

John G & Tho Blount

John Gray Blount to Malcolm Gillis

Washington June 26th 1796

Mr. Malcolm Gillis

Sir¹³⁹

Yours by Captain Smith of the Russell was delivered, for which as well as the civilities Shewn Cap^t. Smith accept my thanks,

Cap^t. Smith again sails for your place with the Russell loaded with Lumber, which I expect will answer Your market, the Misfortunes he met with last voyage [2] prevented his returning sooner, He has my instruction to value on you who [I] am well assured will transact his business much better than any stranger can do it

I wish produce in return provided the prices there afford a prospect of profit, To enable you to judge of that You have below the prices that they will probably command here, If produce cannot be had there to afford a proffit I wish the Brig to beat up to Turks Island and bring home a load of Salt and Dollars for the ballance —

As all our hands are real American I rest satisfied that none of them will be impressed, but the impressments which have been made at Port AuPrince makes it difficult to get men for

¹³⁹ From the Letter Book. Gillis was an otherwise unidentified merchant of Moole St. Nicolas, Hispaniola. Blount to Thomas Smith, June 25, 26, 1796, in this volume.

that Port without giving extravagant Wages, I therefore trust that you will spare no pains to hasten the departure of the Russell as I would prefer Her calling for Salt to being detained for produce even if low

If you are induced to think that another Cargo of Lumber will answer she shall return immediately or if you can contract for any quantity [3] deliverable next winter, Tar, Timber, Scantling and Boards at 40 Dollars and 22 Inch Shingles at 10 Dlls I will deliver them provided our vessells continue to pass unmolested, please give me the earliest notice to any port North of this & S^o of New York of the arrival of the Russell with you.

I am with esteem
Your Most Obt
J G Blount

Prices which Produce
will probably command

at the return of the Russell
Molasses 5/8 of a Dllr per Gll
Sugar cgt. to Jaimaica 2nd quality 12 to 14 Dlls
Coffee /4 Dll by the 100^w or Bbl

The above are the prices by the Cask or 100^w as we generally
Sell at this place

J. G. Blount

John Gray Blount to Thomas Smith

Washington June 26th 1796

Capt. Tho^s. Smith ¹⁴⁰

I understand from Captain Smith from Portauprince that Lumber is high and provisions very low there, you will therefore take as much Lumber as posible and as few Herrings and proceed with all posible dispatch for Port auprince and as I am convinced that a man on the spot knowing every person and their wants and articles, have wrote the Letter herewith to Mr. Gillis and expect he will divide the commissions with you, for note, I have not told him the Vessell was to his address, but that I had instructed you to value on him, however if he will not

¹⁴⁰ From the Letter Book.

divide the commission let him do the business and charge his commissions as well as yours

If you and he are of opinion that Molasses Sugar, and Coffee will answer lay out all your Cash but about 1000 Dlls in such as will best answer, but if Produce is too high you must take your Cash and beat up to Turks [2] Island and take in as much salt as you can bring over the Swash ¹⁴¹ and proceed home, as the season of danger is fast approaching, dispatch is of great moment and of course you Should not too long try to get to Turks Island, therefor take in a plenty of ballast to come home with if you do not find the wind unfavourable to get to Turks Island

Wishing you Safety and dispatch
I am Your Most Obt
J G Blount

William Murdock to John Gray Blount [with enclosures]

London 27th June 1796

Mr J. G. Blount
Washington
N^o. Carolina

Sir,

I have your favor of the 29 Nov^r. & 7 May, both which with Mr Williamsons Power of Attorney reached me very lately. — I now inclose you Powers of Attorney to enable me to receive his Legacy. — You'll observe that Williamson is an Assumed Name, & that Bargeau is the real Name, how this happend I know not, but I presume it was nothing more than Whim or Caprice in Mr Williamson to change his name, & not with any Discreditable Motive — He must Sign his Name thus "Henry Williamson — otherwise Charles Bargeau" "called in the above Order Henry Williamson" — the least Deviation from this will destroy & vitiate the intention of the Powers, for at all the Public Offices here, they adhere rigidly to forms & rules of their own, from which they will on no Acc^t diviate, if therefore, you commit the smallest error, all will be render'd useless — The Powers must be executed before a

¹⁴¹ The entrance to Pamlico Sound, only eight feet deep in places. See Blount to John Wallace, November 17, 1796, n.237, in this volume.

Notary Public, with his Seal affixed, & then the Governor of the State must affix his Seal & declare that the Notary is duly authorised & qualified as a Notary — After the Powers are executed, return them to me by two different Conveyances to ensure Safety — Mr Ja^s Tucker of Norfolk is my Correspondent, if you send them to him, or to any other Gent^t at that place they will soon reach me — You'll observe the Money Stands in two ways. — Viz^t. One hundred Pounds 10/ — in the Bank & Five Hundred Pounds in South Sea Annuities, the latter I presume is worth about 60 pct, and [2] will grow worse, as long as the War lasts, so that the sooner the Business is finished the better. It appears to me that the proceed of the whole Legacy will not Amount to £500 — Tho' I understand it was the intention of the Testator to leave that Sum compleat to Mr Williamson — If I am rightly informed there was £2000 — left to be equally divided between the four Brothers in America, & in case of Death the Heirs to receive in proportion of £500 — to each of the Leagatees, if then the other three Brothers are Dead, & have left no heirs, the whole of course reverts to Mr H^y Williamson & his Heirs. — Before the other £1500 — can be obtained it must be proved very clearly to the Chancellor, that the three Brothers are Dead without Issue — I may be mistaken as to the Sum left by Will, but I understood the Attorney to the Estate that there was £500 — left to each of the Brothers, that there were four, & that in case of Death without Issue it was all to go to the Surviving Heirs, — I will take an Opp^{ty} as soon as I can to be better informed, and will write you again, at present however nothing can be obtained more th[an]* is Comprehended in the Powers herewith —

I am respectfully

Dr. Sir,

Your obt S^t

Will^m. Murdock

I find upon enquiry there is £1500 — South Sea Annuities & the Dividends Accruing thereon due to Mr Bargeau provided the other three Brothers are dead without Issue — but this must be very clearly proved before it will be paid to the Surviving Brother —

I am Sir

Y^{rs} &c

WM

* Hole in manuscript.

[enclosures]

Mr Williamson must Sign as below
 Henry Williamson otherwise
 Charles Bargeau call'd in the
 above order Henry Williamson

[Seal]—

This Letter of Attorney to be executed in the presence of a Notary Public, who affixes his official Seal, the Chief Magistrate of the place to certify that the person subscribing himself a Notary Public, is a Notary Public, and due credit may be given to his Act and Deed — And the Signature to be the same as written in Pencil

John Gray Blount to J. W. G. Prescott

Washington June 29th 1796

Captain Prescott ¹⁴²

You have command of the Schooner Regulator loaded agreeable to Invoice and the object is to make a good voyage with all possible dispatch which is submitted entirely to your Judgement and industry, our opinion is that you had best proceed to Montecrist ¹⁴³ and either sell there or proceed to Jaimaica as you see offers the best prospect, perhaps the troubled waters there may produce Something and you will exercise your own Judgement in all cases for the benefit of the voyage or sale of the schooner which should not be under three Hundred Joe's ¹⁴⁴ [2] If you proceed to Jaimaica and find you have 800 Dlls to bring back you had best proceed with Negroes immediately from the Coast and purchase as many Molasses Hhds and fill and fill [*sic*] with water as will ballast the Regulator to the Havannah where you will either do the business or apply to Mr. Poey, but recommend the latter as he must be best acquainted, and if He will advance money to us and have insured and charge us the premium, you had best make the Cargo as valuable as posible if the prices there will justify the measure, but at all events bring about half a load of molasses, For such sums as he may advance you may give Bills on us at 60 days either at this place or Philadelphia,

¹⁴² From the Letter Book.

¹⁴³ Montecristi, on the north-central coast of Hispaniola.

¹⁴⁴ Slang for double johannes, Portuguese gold coins issued from 1772 to 1835 and worth about \$17.62.

But in all cases if you return in the Regulator let it be to this place but it may so happen that you can sell the Regulator and purchase or get freight home or to Philadelphia or New York and you are at liberty to do whatever appears best for a good voyage and mind to write us all opportunities to the continent

Wishing you safety and dispatch

We are &c.

J G & Tho Blount.

Robeson Mumford¹⁴⁵ to John Gray Blount

Fayette ville 2^d July 1796

Sir

Your letter directed to the Sheriff of this County, was received only a few days since — Owing to the neglect of some of the Magistrates, in returning their lists of taxable property — the Lists have not yet been delivired [to] the Sheriff for Collection —

The tax in this County is 2/ public. 2/ County & 1/ parish 5/ on the Poll or 300 acres — my not having the lists puts it out of my power to inform you of the Amount of your tax — but you can ascertain it yourself — as it is probable that you have the quantity of land given in —

Your paying the Amount into the Treasury will be agreeable to me — and it will be necessary that you forward without delay the Treasurers receipt — as our Court begins on the 11 Inst — and I shall begin the Collection immediately after

I am your Most

Obedient Servant

R Mumford

Addressed: John Gray Blount esquire
Washington
North Carolina

Pr post

¹⁴⁵ The clerk and master of equity in Cumberland County, where Blount had land. See Jacob Rhodes to Blount, May 6, 1796, in this volume; *Fayetteville Gazette*, January 2, 1793.

*J. W. G. Prescott to John Gray Blount*Ocacoc [Ocracoke] 4th. July 1796

Sir

I have taken out the Russell 51 barrells herrings which with what we had before according to Williams's accot. makes 173 barrells for which inclosed is a bill Lading. — I was Obliged to borrow from Capt. Ross's Ship 84 fathom of 2 1/2 inch rope that I could not do without. I offered to pay in Cash for it but he wou'd accept of nothing but promise of [its] being returned by you, which I hope you will Comply with — the fathoms 6 foot each measured on a Scale. — We are now under Weigh, Williams & Foscue both unwell and the Cook Ditto, my Crew this time is Certainly a respectable one.

I am Very Respectfully

Sir

Y^r Obed Sev^t

J W G Prescott

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Washington

*Benjamin Atkinson to John Gray Blount*Ellises Landing¹⁴⁶ July 7th 1796Mr. Jn^o. G Blount

Dear Sir I duly Rec^d. yours of post & have done all I could. the Naval Stores now sent is not Inspected. I was forced to take them as I could get them [*i.e.*] in bad order the Fresh¹⁴⁷ having overflowed them [,] 1/4 of the Hoops missing & the Barrells uncommon Small & about 2/3 full & nothing less than 2 dollars have I paid for any of the Turp^e and those now sent is all that is at any of the landings below Town Creek to Greenville it is all that can be had at any Rate[.] I have sent you 10 Barrells Pork lest you should want for the use of the Vessel at 16 dollars if you do not want it please to store it with 2 Barrells

¹⁴⁶ On the north side of the Tar River above Greenville in Pitt County. "Bensborough," Atkinson's home and place of business, was not far from this location. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, maps opposite 64 and 476.

¹⁴⁷ A sudden surge of water, a freshet.

of Lard at 1/8 P *bl* I also now send one more Barrel Beeswax which please to Ship in the Tuly with the three Barrels I sent down last by Johnstons flatt[.] I now send 40 dollars P M^r Andrews to take up my Bond ¹⁴⁸ at the Collectors office, which please to take up — You will keep Sam & Ben as [2] long as you want them & be pleased to make them cooper Sufficient & fill it full. The News of the French taking our Naval Stores much alarms me, but I do not know how to avoid sending mine and shall rest altogether on your conduct in that Business

Except of my best wishes for your
Prosperity Your most ob^t H^m Serv^t
Ben. Atkinson

Addressed: M^r John G Blount
Merchant
Washington

By M^r. Andrews

Benjamin Smith to John Davis

Belvedere [Brunswick County] 17th July 1796

Sir¹⁴⁹

Having explained to Col^o. Williams and I believe to yourself that I sacrificed that part of the Green Swamp (Sold to him) ¹⁵⁰ at an under value for the purpose of giving ease to my mind by making some payments which were very necessary and having received with an apology for the former disappointment assurances that the future payments would be punctual, it is with much surprise I find 6 weeks going on without either receiving or hearing any thing[.] I also explained to Col^o. Williams as well as your self that I should look to you as being nearest to me[.] this is more proper as my last express returned without

¹⁴⁸ Prior to 1842, importing merchants might give bond for the payment of tariff duties, thereby deferring cash payments as late as 12 months and affording the merchant the use of the capital for that period. R. Elberton Smith, *Customs Valuation in the United States; A Study in Tariff Administration* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), 93-94; Jacob to John Gray Blount, March 8, 1798, n.34, in this volume.

¹⁴⁹ From the Letter Book.

¹⁵⁰ Allison and Blount sought to buy land to fill a contract with Judge Wilson by purchasing from Smith. To keep the purchase price low they used third parties John Davis and John Pugh Williams; however, Allison, pressed for cash, sold to Wilson at too low a price to pay off Davis and Williams, who therefore could not, or did not, pay Smith. This letter is the result. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 316-317, 598, 603, 619; David Allison to Blount, March 3, 1796, in this volume.

money [2] and I had to pay most of the expense[.] I therefore take this method of informing you that unless I receive the money due in a very short time I am obliged to seek it in a manner that will reflect as little on your Credit as it will be disagreeable to me and I once for all inform you that my arrangements are such that I must not be disappointed in any future payment. You must excuse me but what I do, and shall do[,] will be the effect of necessity, and after such friendly intimations you cant in reason blame

Yours &c.

B Smith

P. S. I will wait the return of this Post to hear from you[.] expect no longer, for I am this moment suffering much for Credit and mind for want of the Cash & to raise it I have offered Property at less than half value[.] this is more than a brother can expect with reason

Gen^l. Benj^a. Smith

to

John Davis Esq^r.

James Cole Mountfloreance to John Gray Blount

Paris the 21^t. July 1796

Sir

A few days since I have been honered with yr. Letter¹⁵¹ by Maj^r. Fulton, & previous thereto, I had delivered Some of the Grants to Doc^r. Romaine¹⁵² bound to New-York, & proposed transmitted [*i.e.*, transmitting] the others with all the papers by Col^o. [Abishai] Thomas — you are perfectly right, Sir, in your Belief that not an acre has been disp[os]*ed of; Whilst in England last Winter, I thought that Some Lands might be advantageously sold there, & in Consequence left Grants to the amount of 20,000 Acres, but am writing to the person to deliver them to Col^o. Thomas, whom I request to charge Doc^r. Romaine with them, in case he should not be sailed, that Gentleman having

¹⁵¹ Blount to James Cole Mountfloreance, March 18, 1796, in this volume.

¹⁵² Dr. Nicholas Romaine of Edenton and New York was associated with the Blounts in mercantile and land operations. He later was involved with William Blount in the latter's "conspiracy." Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 228, n.4; Masterson, *William Blount*, 306, ff.

* Illegible.

left this place for London, on his way to New York — I am making descriptive Lists of the grants & papers, and will take a Receipt per Triplicate of them from M^r. [Fulwar] Skipwith two of which I will transmit to you by different opportunities for my Discharge & your Satisfaction — I have constantly corresponded with Gov^r [William] Blount since I left America, and as most of my Letters were directed to him or to Col^o. Th^o. Blount, I doubted not but that —————* the Contracts were communicated to you — My respectful C[om]pl^{ts}* to M^{rs}. Blount, & I have the honor to be

Respectfully
Sir

Y^r. most Obed^t. & most
humble Serv^t.
J. C. Mountfloreance

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Mercht/
Washington
N^o. Carolina
Pimlico - Sound

Abner Neale to John Gray Blount

New berne 21st. July 1796. —

Dear Sir /.

On my return found that White Ambrose would not swear any thing about that business as he says a great part of the Articles were never delivered, but thrown overboard, therefore he will not Swear to any thing about the Business; I am of opinion that he is fearful that he will be bro't in for the Articles missing, therefore you have no dependence on him, — we have two new Candidates for the Town, Viz. Grayham¹⁵³ and Badger,¹⁵⁴ and I somewhat expect Spaight¹⁵⁵ will offer as his Con-

* Hole in manuscript.

¹⁵³ Edward Graham served in the House of Commons from New Bern in 1797. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 122.

¹⁵⁴ Thomas Badger was elected to the House of Commons from New Bern in 1796. He died of fever at Washington, North Carolina in October, 1799. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 122; *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, October 22, 1799.

¹⁵⁵ Richard Dobbs Spaight, the prominent Carolina statesman, was a close of friend of the Blounts. For a sketch of his career see Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 528, n.7 and *Dictionary of American Biography*, XVII, 419-420.

gressional Ellection seems to be unfavourable, in the upper Countys, and there is little hope of his succeeding in that Ellection & in the Town he will undoubtedly. We are all well, Compts &c. — Abner Neale

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington

John Gray Blount to Robert Smithey

Washington July 24th 1796

D Sir¹⁵⁶

A few days ago Cap^t. Sabins returned with your Letter informing me you had del^d. him 1000 bushells Corn and some Stone. The Stone has arrived but the Corn which was much more wanted he has none of, and complains that he has been much trifled with, His owner is much disappointed as he had engaged the corn and he is thereby considerable injured, which I am bound to make good and the advance I get on the Shingles will not reimburse me that loss, Had you complyd with your promise and dispatched the vessell agreeable to my bargain I should not have exacted from you more than I gave him for the load there, but you must now expect to make me whole at least and if you continue to do business there observe more punctuality or nothing can be done for you, with an expectation that you will be prepared to pay that amount of that cargo of shingles I shall draw on you in a few days at 60 days and give you [2] this early notice that you may be prepared

Please write me immediately on receipt of this what I may expect and explain if posible the cause of my present disappointment.

I am yours &c.
J G Blount

Mr. Rob^t. S. Smithey
City of
Washington

¹⁵⁶ From the Letter Book.

*J. W. G. Prescott to John Gray Blount*Kingston 27th. July 1796

Sir

I arrived here the 25th. after a tedious passage¹⁵⁷ of Calms and head winds where I find every kind of American Produce a mere drug. We have not as yet disposed of any thing. but expect to Sell the herrings this day from 4 1/0* to perhaps 5 Dollars. this is calld high as beef and Pork is from 7 to 12 Dollars. I shall endeavour to make out to go to the Havana and by that means perhaps make the Voyage not quite so bad as it now bids for. My detention on the passage was very unlucky indeed as by it I missed the freight of 100 Negroes to the Havana at 12 Dollars P head. I directed my attention to some object of this kind the moment of my arrival but the freight had been engaged the day before. I shall make every exertion to procure a freight of Negroes for that place but I fear I shall not succeed [as?]* few negroes are now for Sale. —

I [shall]* write you by every opportunity and [2] Inform you of my proceedings

Shoud I not procure a freight I fear my N[et] proceeds will not Amo^t. to the 800 Dollars you limit my going to the Havana with. —

I shall procure letters of Introduction here from Mr. Lake and another Gentleman here who has Connections in the Havana, as Supporters to the letter I have to Poey and perhaps shoud I not deal with him in the way you direct I may meet with some other person who may like to do it. —

I am Sir

Your Obed. Serv^t.

J W G Prescott

Addressed:

John Gray Blount Esq^r.

Washington

North Carolina

¹⁵⁷ Prescott had left Ocracoke on July 4. Prescott to Blount, July 4, 1796, in this volume.

* Hole in manuscript.

*J. W. G. Prescott to John Gray Blount*Kingston 28th. July 1796

Sir

I wrote you last Evening via New York In which I mentioned to you the low prices of Our produce here and the prospect of making you this time a very bad voyage. I expect we shall get a 4 1/2 Dollars for Herrings 12 to 14 for pork and about 8 for beef, my not arriving a day Sooner was very unlucky as I thereby misssd a freight of 100 and odd Negroes to the Havana a 12 Dollars per Head which woud have made a deal of odds in the Voyage I am Still endeavouring to effect Something of the kind, and shall endeavour to get Letters from this so as to ensure a Load for the Schooner in the Havana for bills on Phil^a. — I shall take care to write you of what I do & am

Sir

Your Obed Serv^t.

J W G Prescott

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.

Washington

North Carolina

*John Gray Blount to David Allison*Washington August 2nd. 1796Dr. Sir,¹⁵⁸

If I am ever to have another letter from you pray let it be soon for I am out of all patience not having rec^d. a line since the 17th. June from either you or W^m Blount and my situation which is as described in my last letter from Mr. J. B. Evans¹⁵⁹ informing that Doct^r. Hall had passed to him the acceptance of J G & T Blount for £949 .. 17 .. 1 P. C. payable the 5th Sep^r. next of which I know nought but he requests me to Inform him Whether he is to draw on us or whether [we] will remit it [to] him [2] I have wrote him that as the acceptance was made there it must be paid there; He also says he is requested by the N^o. American

¹⁵⁸ From the Letter Book. For Allison's reply, see Allison to Blount, August 19, 1796, in this volume.

¹⁵⁹ John B. Evans, a Philadelphia merchant. See David Allison to Blount, August 19, 1796, in this volume.

insurance Company to enquire if our Vessells insured by them had arrived; To that I answered yes that they had and that some loss had happened to the Russell an Acc^t. of which I had some time forwarded[.] I hope you have before this presented the Acc^t. And if the premiums were not paid discount may answer them.

I want paid to Cadwallader Evans Attorney in fact for Abel James & Sons 1552 17/100 Dollars and the bill in favor of Stewart must be taken up, but I have no assistance to give you except a Bill of Doct^r. Hall for fifteen Hundreds Dollars which you have inclosed; but I shall have to draw on you for at least two Thousand Dollars which I have no way to pay but by your selling Lands or the arrival [3] of either the russell or Regulator at Phi^{la}. from the Havannah[.] both of them have orders if they go to Jamaica to proceed to Phil^a. [by] way of the Havannah & to call on you[.] If they accomplish my wish we shall be strong for mercantile transactions & able to spare a little to Land and that Subject ought not be neglected[.] by holding the titles of the Land sold we subject ourselves to the payment of the taxes think of that. I have purchased out Ragsdales interest in the Buncombe Lands at 10,000 Dollars[.] there will be one million of Acres if not lost by poverty and them good

If Hall will not accept have the bill protested and send me as soon as possible that I may take the proper steps that I may make him pay me What he owes me. [4] From the present appearances of things Tom Blount will be reelected & also myself to the Assembly Speculation Notwithstanding¹⁶⁰

I am your &
John G Blount

P.S. I forget to mention that a certain Hightower of Buncombe County had entered much Land in Buncombe County & som of it that which Carson sold you and as a man may now get his warrant out without paying he may draw his warrants and come on to sell, be guarded against him he is dishonest and can make no title to any Land there

J G Blount

Mr. David Allison
Philadelphia

¹⁶⁰ I.e., in spite of the complaints rising against their business practices and huge land purchases.

*Gabriel Ragsdale¹⁶¹ to John Gray Blount*Raleigh August the 4th 1796

Sir/

having Been fast in the Cluches of Richard Blackledge for the Space of one longe week, I now Disengage my Self from his tallons with my head towards home which I hope to reach previous to the Electtion, and then or in a few days to Nashville. Should thare aney thing turn up in which I Can serve you in that Cuntry I Shall on information gladly serve you

I have been conversing with Richard on the Business I have in Contemplation in that Cuntry and he thinks it will not hurt his Brother Benjamin¹⁶² to undertake it, and in Case he should fail says he would Recomend it to his Brother William¹⁶³ to whome I Should not have the least objection if he is to be as plainly understood as the rest of the family, which I make no doubt of[.] Should it not answer [to use] Benjamin Please Convers with William and request him to write me Immediatety — as I Shall be in Suspence till I hear from one or Both of them as I Reasonably Suppose that you will in all proverbillity [2] make Benjamin Such Propositions as he will acced to. I hope Dr. Sir you will not thin[k] it wrong of me in what has passed Between him and my self as I would not Consider my own advantage in that Case to the Injury of yours. Should I not arrive at Raleigh as soon as Colo Love¹⁶⁴ should we be both Elected pleas not mention to him my having given you the memorandom of the Cumberland Lands as I Received it of him I suppose with some degree of Confidence tho no charge was

¹⁶¹ A surveyor and Blount agent. He was also active in State affairs and served in the House of Commons from 1792 to 1796. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 490, n.23; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 51. For his later mental collapse see Mary Ragsdale to Blount, January 24, 1797, in this volume.

¹⁶² Benjamin Blackledge, a younger brother of Richard Blackledge and a business associate of the Blounts. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 165; II, 236; William Orr to Blount, June 18, 1799, in this volume.

¹⁶³ William Blackledge, another younger brother of Richard Blackledge, who continued the tradition of friendship and business association between the families. He performed the duties of political and economic reporter in the manner of Abishai Thomas and Hugh Williamson. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 298, n.81.

¹⁶⁴ Robert Love (1760-1849) was an Augusta County Virginian. He served in the Revolution and in 1782 moved to Washington County, North Carolina (now Tennessee). After brief flirtation with the State of Franklin movement he was loyal to North Carolina, serving in the General Assembly and in the Convention of 1789. He also served as justice of the peace and lieutenant colonel of the Washington County militia, then moved to western North Carolina in 1792 and represented Buncombe County in the Senate for several terms. In 1821 he was one of the commissioners who ran the southern end of the North Carolina-Tennessee boundary. He founded Waynesville, North Carolina, and prospered in land speculation and planting. Samuel C. Williams, *History of the Lost State of Franklin* (Johnson City, Tennessee: The Watauga Press, 1924), 328, hereinafter cited as Williams, *Lost State of Franklin*. His activities with the Blounts usually concerned land purchases and claims. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*; Gabriel Ragsdale to Blount, October 20, 1796, in this volume.

Given me to Conseal it from aney Person [,] as I would [not] wish him to think I would do aney thing to his Disadvantag which was By no means ment my Respet to

the family. yours
G Ragsdale

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r
Washington

Gabriel Ragsdale to Richard Blackledge

Hi[ll]sborough 6th of august 1796

Si^r

I have again Got hold of the act of Congress Describing the line between us and the Indians¹⁶⁵ and from which I find there may be had at least 400 000 acres of Land far Superior in point of quallity to aney in the Country and from your Friendship to me I will not Enter aney till I hear from you, that is to Say u[n]less I know whether you wish to have a partner ship in it, Colo Dollison¹⁶⁶ [Donelson] Expresses a wish to go into the Business and if agreable to [y]ou* we will go Jointly into the Business that is to say yourself my self and Colo Donelson as I informed M^r Blount of the Business and he Expresd no anksxiety of [no interest in] Going to it — But I think it But right to Councill him on the Subject as ingratitetud Shall never be at-trebited to me and when you have so Counciled M^r Blount you will send Express to me or write Immediately by post and if you think Propper I shall immediately make the Entryes as you

¹⁶⁵ Probably the Treaty of Holston with the Cherokee Indians, made by William Blount on July 2, 1791, and ratified by the Senate and signed by the President on November 11, 1791. The treaty described the boundary between Indians' and whites' lands in Tennessee. In the same year, however, Congress requested and received a report describing the lands of the United States "unclaimed either by Indians, or by citizens of those states." The descriptions differ markedly. Clarence S. Carter (ed.), *The Territorial Papers of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1934-1936), IV, 60-69, 84-100, hereinafter cited as Carter, *Territorial Papers*.

¹⁶⁶ Stockley, or Stokely, Donelson was born in Virginia, the son of Colonel John Donelson. Like his father, a surveyor and voracious land speculator, he was much sought after as a partner in land companies because of his surveying talents and alledged accommodating business morality. He was thus active with Governor Richard Caswell, Secretary of State James Glasgow, and Governor William Blount. Through their influence he was elected county surveyor of Sullivan County and then surveyor of all North Carolina's lands in East Tennessee to be sold under the Act of 1783. He was surveyor general of the State of Franklin and sat in its House of Commons. Later he opposed North Carolina's ratification of the Constitution. Under William Blount's territorial government he was a lieutenant colonel in Hawkins County and in 1794 a member of the first Council of State. He was, with Glasgow, a primary figure in the various North Carolina land frauds. Williams, *Lost State of Franklin*, 306.

* Manuscript torn.

and Mr Blount shall think Best. this Can be done aney time previous to my siting out to Nashville which will be about the 20th of October as you will Proberbly have to Send to me Lit it be as soon as possable—.

I am You[r]s
G Ragsdale

R Blackledge
Addressed: Richard Blackledge Esqr.
Raleigh
M^{rs} Michel

William Thomson to John Gray Blount

Beaufort August 8th 1796

Dr. Sir/

Agreeable to your request by a Letter received from Richard Blackledge the 24th of July past to inform you of the Taxes due on the Lands of Mr. David Allison in Carteret County, there appears by the Entry takers Books to be 200 Entrys of 640 acres each of which 127 were entered Sept^r. 22^d. 1794 — and 73 May 5th 1795 — the whole Am^t. 128000 Acres which makes 426 poles & 2/3 at 9/6 each — Amount of the Tax £202 .. 13 .. 4 due for the year 1795 — And you are hereby requested to send the money into the County as soon as possible as I propose to set of to the Treasury by the first of September to settle &C

Your Ob^t. Serv^t.
W^m. Thomson Jun^r. Sh^{rr}.

The Tax in Carteret is

Public Tax—	2 .. 0
Poor Tax—	3 .. 0
County Tax—	2 .. 6
Court house —	2 .. 0
	<hr/>
	£0 .. 9 .. 6

Addressed: John G. Blount Esquire
Washington

*Henry Tuley to John Gray Blount*Bells Bay August 9^t 1796 —

Dear Sir

I have sent you the grampus and hope you may be pleased with hur[.] have sent polepris and Dick[.]¹⁶⁷ I have very little Iron hear[.] I shall begin to work on the Ship next month[.] I expect to be up to Washington the furst of next month if I am well — I have hiered Mr Patterig to pilot the vessel you may settel with him as you and he thinks proper —

I never was in grator want of mone will thank you to Send me three hundred dollars by Jacob Tuley & you will very much oblige your humbel St——

Henry Tuley

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr
by Mr Jacob
Tuley

*Abner Neale to John Gray Blount*New bern 17th. Aug^t. 1796.

Dear Sir,

Yours p^{er} Captⁿ. Ozmon I received and am happy to hear of Toms good success,¹⁶⁸ but am sorry to inform you that Spaight is, I believe enevitably lost; as from the Acct^s. we now have, Bryan¹⁶⁹ is upwards of 700 ahead, and we have the returns from every County except Hyde & Carteret, and I fear they will not bring up, in fact I have long dispared of his Election, Our County is [William] M^c. Clure, Senate, J[ohn] S.[pence] West and W[illiam] Bryan Commons, Thomas Badger for the Town, every effort was made for Spaight here, and a respectable Majority but to no purpose, I fear,¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Polepris and Dick were slaves.

¹⁶⁸ Thomas Blount was elected to the United States House of Representatives.

¹⁶⁹ Nathan Bryan (1748-1798) represented Jones County in the North Carolina House of Commons in 1787 and 1791-1794, and was elected to the Fourth and Fifth United States Congresses, serving from March 4, 1795 until he died in Philadelphia in 1798. He was succeeded by Spaight. Thomas to John Gray Blount, July 5, 1798, in this volume; *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 617.

¹⁷⁰ See Abner Neale to Blount, July 21, 1796, in this volume. Spaight lost as Neale predicted. Delbert Harold Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy in North Carolina, 1789-1816* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), 85 hereinafter cited as Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*.

My two youngest Children have been Sick ever since we got Home, Janie has miss'd her Ague but Abner continues to have it every day, tho not so bad; the Inhabitants of this[2] place wear very long faces, on Acc^t. of Spaight's Election and sincerely wish that Tom, could lend him a sufficient number;— M^{rs} Hill constantly Teazing me, Milley is well as well as myself.

Comp^{ts}. &c. Abner Neale

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire,
Washington.

Fav^d. by. }

B. Blackledge. }

David Allison to John Gray Blount

Phil^a. August 19th. 1796

Dear Sir

I received your letter of the 2nd. Instant and observe the Contents and to the charge of neglect in writing I admit my guilt but declare that it does not proceed from unwillingness but from the pressing Circumstances I am under which prevent my writing to you in such way as to afford you pleasure and I am unwilling ever to give pain by transferring things which I am made for bearing to others, this Idea alone has long prevented my writing with a wish to forward by the first the *quantum sufficit* but your anxiety to hear from me obliges me, however painful to write[.] My prospects have long been flattering that I would have ways and means to forward you Certificates long before this, they yet remain unfinished, a delay which gives me many uneasy hours but such are the ways of business here that a *beggar* must wait the pleasure of the donor. I urge, hurry, fret, and Curse but all in vain I cant budge them one step faster than their pleasure. I think however that however that [*sic*] I shall send you in all next [2] Week 10 or 12^m£ in part and the balance with haste afterward as fast as they can be picked up for I shall then have the ways and means in possession.

Your answer to J[ohn] B E[vans].¹⁷¹ was right, the money must be paid here and he knew it.

I rec^d. your accounts against the Ensurers and am about getting it settled but in what way I cant tell.

Doctor J[ohn] Hall is not in Town, I have shewn the bill to the person transacting his business and noted the presentment and will endeavour to pay the sum to C[adwallader] Evans which you say is due—when you draw for two thousand dollars pray let it be as long at least as 60 days for I must depend on raising it here[.] Lands cant be sold for Cash.

The purchase from Ragsdale is a good one — I wish a similar thing was done with Ogg[.]¹⁷² he has again ordered the bill against me and I have already so many damned suits that I wish that set aside if possible, I mean his own part[.] all the rest are here and with you, Carnes¹⁷³ has sent his on and I am about settling it. [3] I shall be aware of your Buncombe neighbour,¹⁷⁴ I will buy no more except to complete Contracts where the quantity is short.

Excuse my long negligence with a promise that as soon as I can write pleasingly to your feelings you shall be without complaint on that head.

I am Dr Sir

Your Ob^t Servant

David Allison

P. S. Mr [William] Blount waits only the issue of the Certificates [—?]* sets out.

Addressed: John Gray Blount esquire

Washington

North Carolina

¹⁷¹ See Blount to Allison, August 2, 1796, in this volume. The reference here is to the complex dealings of Andrew Jackson, Allison, Evans, and the Blounts. Jackson sold land to Allison in 1795 and received Allison's personal notes in return. Jackson endorsed the notes and exchanged them for goods for his Nashville store, one of the merchants with whom he dealt being Evans, a sometime Allison partner and debtor. Allison defaulted on the notes later in the year, and Jackson hurriedly sold property to cover the debts, and in so doing worked with William Blount in Philadelphia. Blount defaulted, however, and could neither pay the notes for which he was surety nor his own notes. Jackson sustained a heavy loss, as did the Blounts. Bassett, *Correspondence of Jackson*, I, 13-15, 21, 25, 45; II, 427, 428; III, 413; VI, 420, 422; William Blount-Andrew Jackson Note, June 11, 1796, in "Other Papers for 1796-1802," in this volume.

¹⁷² Blount had bought Ragsdale's interest in one million acres of land. Allison wanted George Ogg, a critic, also bought out. Blount to David Allison, August 2, 1796, and Allison to Blount, April 7, 1796, in this volume.

¹⁷³ Thomas P. Carnes (1762-1822), a prominent Georgia lawyer who served in the Georgia House of Representatives and as that State's solicitor general and attorney general. He was a Representative from Georgia to the Third Congress. He had apparently belonged to or had a contract with the company formed by Blount with Allison and others, although he had sold his interest to Allison in 1795. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*; *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 663.

¹⁷⁴ See Blount to Allison, August 2, 1796, in this volume. Probably Oldham Hightower or Auston Hightower. *Second Census: 1800* (Buncombe County).

* Obscured by seal.

Willie Jones¹⁷⁵ to John Gray Blount

Aug^t. 21. 1796. —

Dear Sir

When I saw you last, you gave me Expectations that I should soon receive the bal. due to B.[enjamin] McCulloh's Estate and that the money due from [Mathew] McKiel to [Joseph] Montfort's Estate should be recovered at your then next Court: But I have not since heard from you. — I assure you that I am actually distressed for Money; — I am largely in Advance for Montfort, and I am now to raise upwards of £3000.. hard Money, to pay the demands of Col^o. Hamilton & others against McCulloh. — You ought to get the Money, or something else, due to my sister for the old Phaeton.

I hope you & your Family enjoy Health & am, with Respect,

Dr. Sir,

Yours sincerely

Willie Jones

Free

Addressed: Mr. John G. Blount
Washington

J. W. G. Prescott to John Gray Blount

Havana 22^d. August 1796

Sir

I wrote you Several times from Jamaica informing you of my very bad Sales there. and as some of my Letters must ere this have reachd you I shall not enlarge hereon that disagreeable Subject. We left Jamaica the 4th. and arrived here the 19th., owing to the Strong Westerly Current. after a very disagreeable time, one of the Negroes very ill indeed, and Williams entirely disabled and of no kind of use to me whatever. the Negroe is now perfectly recovered and one of the best I have — I have

¹⁷⁵ The wealthy aristocrat-democrat who had led the Hillsboro Convention in defeating the ratification of the Federal Constitution on grounds that it infringed upon the State's powers. In 1789 he retired from active politics, but remained an ardent Jeffersonian Republican. H. M. Wagstaff (ed.), *The Papers of John Steele* (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission [State Department of Archives and History], 2 volumes, 1924), II, 534, n.1, hereinafter cited as Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*; Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, II, 85-99.

applied to Mr. Poey who seems willing to Comply with requisition. which I shall make use of as you desire should I not Sell the Vessell ["Regulator"]. which I have not much hopes of — The Vessell I write [*i.e.* send] this by laying off and on for water I can say no more at present. but

am Sir

Y^r. Obed^t Serv^t.

J W G Prescott

Cap^t. Barney¹⁷⁶ saild from here the 11th. in a french frigate of 46 Guns and two others of smaller Size under his Command in quest of the English Convoy which I parted with on the 12th. Off Cape Antonio¹⁷⁷ consistg of 160 Sail. and very Strongly Convey^d

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Washington
North Carolina

*John Gray Blount to Joseph Ross*¹⁷⁸

Washington Aug^t. 25th 1796

Mr. Joseph Ross

Sir¹⁷⁹

Some time past I contracted with a Mr. Robert Smithey of the City of Washington to deliver a quantity of Lumber which I have caused to be delivered to a considerable amount and he on his part was [2] to have delivered Mr. Van Noordens Vessell 1000 bus Corn for 1000 Dollars in part pay of the Shingles but failed so to do by which I am subjected to pay Mr. Van Noorden here 1200 Dollars[,] what it would have sold for at this place

This Mr. Smithey is a young man just seting out in business who I would not wish to injure but it may be best to push him to make payment and therefore I wrote him I should draw for the am^t. he was to have paid Mr. Van Noorden

¹⁷⁶ Joshua Barney (1759-1818), the American naval hero of the Revolution who later (1796-1802) served in the French navy as captain and commodore against the British. *The Encyclopedia Americana* (New York: Americana Corporation, 30 volumes, 1960), III, 268-269.

¹⁷⁷ Cape San Antonio, on the western tip of Cuba.

¹⁷⁸ A Tarboro merchant who went north with Schenck on Blount business. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 219; John Wallace to Blount, December 2, 1797, in this volume.

¹⁷⁹ From the Letter Book.

I now write him I have done so in favor Mr. Schenck. Here-with you have the Letter to him and the Bills at sixty Days for 1000 Dollars[.] please present it for acceptance if he is at Georgetown or the City but if not there take it to Philadelphia where you [3] will find him[.] If you get his acceptance please deliver the Bill to Mr. Schenck who I will intrust [?] about it and if it will not be too much trouble please write me what he does

Excuse this trouble and believe me with much esteem

Your Most obt
John G Blount

John Gray Blount to Robert Smithey

Washington Aug^t. 25th 1796

Mr. Rob^t. S. Smithey
Sir¹⁸⁰

Mr. Van Noorden being disappointed in not geting the Corn I am compeled to pay him what the Corn would have sold for here and for that purpose have drawn in his favor on Mr. Schenck of Tarb^o. who will be in Phil^a. and I now draw on you at the same sight in favour of Mr. Schenck and M^r. Ross bears the Bills for your acceptance [2] I have drawn for no more than you were to have paid on delivery and that at 60 days to accomodate you and flatter myself the Bill be duly honoured.

I am with much esteem
Yours &^c.
J. G Blount

John Gray Blount to Willie Blount ¹⁸¹

Washington September 15th 1796

Dr. Willie,¹⁸²

I wrote you some time past that I had sold your lot in New-

¹⁸⁰ From the Letter Book.

¹⁸¹ Willie Blount (1768-1835) was the half-brother of William and John Gray Blount. He followed William to the Territory South of the Ohio River, where he became his brother's private secretary and a very successful lawyer, governor, and political leader. For his later career, see Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxix; *Dictionary of American Biography*, II, 391.

¹⁸² From the Letter Book.

bern and given an Obligation to make a Deed it will therefore be necessary that you make a Deed in Presence of some Person coming to Raleigh who can prove the same before one of the [2] Judges or execute a Power to me to convey the same; The Lott is N^o 46 and was conveyed by Wilson Blount¹⁸³ and Wife to Jacob Blount [Jr] —

I formerly sent to W^m Blount two or three small Books in which was Recorded most of the Lands JG & T Blount held at Cumberland, I now send another Book in which is recorded all the rest which I hold there with notes to which please have reference; I have also sent Lists of Warrants &c. with memorandum under each head as a more easy way of observing on so many subjects.

I much wish you would get Gen^l. Robinson¹⁸⁴ or some Person well acquainted to describe the Situation and Quality of each piece of Land and Note the same in the Books you have [3], Then have a copy of the whole made and sent to me It would direct me in the sale of the Land and application and applications [*sic*] to purchase are now frequent. If any of the Lands are not well on or the particular Spot or Bounds doubtful please hire a carefull good surveyor by the Day at two Dolls to go and Run out and Mark the bounds & give a particular description of them and connect such as do actually join in a plan which would at all times enable one to find them even should the corners be cut down, a thing I count on as the country Settles.

I make no doubt but W^m Blount has pointed out the mode in which the Taxes are to be paid and in that mode I wish all the Lands in [4] Jesse Cobbs Name to be paid for[.] Edward Harris¹⁸⁵ & Myself have purchased them but have no description of them[;] the Location Book there will show them.

W^m Blount is expected at Tarborough in October and then we shall write you more fully.

¹⁸³ Wilson Blount of New Bern, a cousin. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 4, n.8; William to John Gray Blount, November 7, 1797, in this volume.

¹⁸⁴ General James Robertson (1742-1814), a Virginian by birth and a prominent and influential pioneer in Middle Tennessee. He was a close friend and associate of William Blount, and was particularly useful in the Nashville area, where he acted as agent and surveyor and served in several other important political offices. Masterson, *William Blount, passim*; Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 277, n.41.

¹⁸⁵ Harris, of Rowan County, did surveying for the Blounts as early as 1787. He served on the boundary commission that ran the line between Rowan and Iredell counties, later went to the Tennessee country with William Blount and practiced law for a time before returning to North Carolina. It was probably he who served in the House of Commons for New Bern in 1802 and 1803. He was a Superior Court judge on the Lumberton Circuit at the time of his death, on March 28, 1813. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 279; II, 88; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 122, 352; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, April 2, 1813.

We are all well a thing uncommon at this season and all join in Compl^{ts} to you

Mr Willie Blount

I am as usual
John Gray Blount

*Mary Blount to Susannah Harvey*¹⁸⁶

Bellefont¹⁸⁷ September 26 [1796?]

Dear Sister

I with pleasure write you our Family are well accept Olivia¹⁸⁸ who has not bin well for some time but is not verry sick. we have bin hear near a fortnight S Neale & her two Children also Lucy¹⁸⁹ just able to keep up[.] I expect daily to see her Family increase it was so alarming I could not agree to stay at home[.] it is distressing to go to town it is almost deserted there's a number of verry respectable people died & almost all the rest moved out of town the doctor among the number for whom I was sincearely sorry M^{rs} Whrodes [Rhoads] came to court I was at that time sick[.] M^r Norflet¹⁹⁰ was so fraid it was the fever he would not consent for her to come to see me they stayed at the plantation[.] she was at her house one day & called at the door was all the time I saw her[.] I never felt more for any person than I did for her when M^r Whrodes died she was wild with grief it would have mov'd a stone almost to have bin with her[.] god only knows when this cruel fever will end it is yet verry bad in town & worse at Newbern. When last I heard from your Moma she was well I have not heard from Polly¹⁹¹ since she left Tarborough — please tell M^{rs} Harvey¹⁹² nothing would give me more

¹⁸⁶ Mary Harvey Blount (c. 1766-1818), also called Polly, was the wife of John Gray Blount. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxiv. Susannah Harvey (c. 1768-1818), the widow of Augustus Harvey, later married Jacob Blount, Jr. Since Augustus Harvey was the half-brother of Mary Blount (as well as a brother of Mrs. Reading Blount), Mary Blount called Susannah Harvey "sister" even before the latter married Jacob. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxviii. Susannah Harvey Blount tombstone, St. Peter's Episcopal churchyard, Washington, North Carolina.

¹⁸⁷ "Bellefont" was the home of Lucy Harvey Blount and Reading Blount. It is 10 miles northwest of Washington, on Tranters Creek, in Beaufort County, and is inhabited and well preserved.

¹⁸⁸ Lucy Olivia Blount, daughter of John Gray and Mary Blount. Zella Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families* (Chattanooga: The Lookout Publishing Company, 4 volumes, 1918-1926), I, 36, hereinafter cited as Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*.

¹⁸⁹ Probably Lucy Harvey Blount, wife of Reading Blount. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxv.

¹⁹⁰ James Norfleet (d. 1818), a lawyer of Edenton, or Marmaduke Norfleet, a Scotland Neck planter. *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, June 12, 1818; Ann Harvey to Mrs. John Gray Blount, February 26, 1799, n.3, in this volume.

¹⁹¹ Possibly Polly Ann, a daughter of Reading and Lucy Harvey Blount. Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*, I, 36-37.

¹⁹² Probably Susannah Harvey's mother-in-law.

pleasure than to see her & Nancy¹⁹³ at Washington when it is again healthy[.] should they not leave Eadenton before we will send to the sound with pleasure. When shall we see you say this winter I look forward with pleasure to see My children at home once more —————* you & your family would add to our happy —————* they all [2] hear joind with me in love to you all & believe me to be your's ever affectionately

M Blount

*David Allison to Gabriel Ragsdale*¹⁹⁴ [Copy]

Philadelphia

October 4th 1796

Sir

Your Coverletter to me by JG Blount has Give me the highest oppenian of you a[s] a man of Integratey Honesty & trust, tharefor Please Let me inform you that I Intend Seting up a Store in your County and hopes you to Superintend all my Business in that Cuntry. I Shall allso want a man acquainted with indian Trade as that is my Predetermination to Promote a trade with the Indians Both Creeks & Cherokees which if I Can Carry into Effect so as to attach them two Nations to my Trade I Shall have more Profits By it than aney other Trade I know of. I am in Partnership with one of the Best houses in urope and has made to Said Companey the Greates Sale Lands to them, that Ever was made in the memory of man The Price I Sold at this time I omit informing you of But I Recived two Million of Dollars and a Vast Cargow of Goods Which I intend seling out By hole-

¹⁹³ William Blount's eldest daughter, Ann, who made her home with Thomas Blount in Tarboro. She is erroneously identified as "Nancy Harvey Blount" in Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 71, and is listed as Ann in Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*, I, 36, and in John H. Wheeler, *Reminiscences and Memoirs of North Carolina and Eminent North Carolinians* (Columbus, Ohio: Columbus Printing Works, 1884), lx, hereinafter cited as Wheeler, *Reminiscences*. Nevertheless the evidence is clear that the family called William's daughter Ann, "Nancy" (the usual nickname for the name Ann), probably to avoid confusion with Ann Harvey Blount, her aunt. See Thomas to John Gray Blount, January 17, February 2, April 15, 1800, in this volume. Also see especially the following: Ann Harvey to Mrs. John Gray Blount, May 11, [1800], in this volume. Willie Blount to Thomas Hart, April 3, 1803, John Gray Blount Papers; William Blount to Thomas Hart, February 9, 1794, Thomas Hart Collection, Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., hereinafter cited as Hart Collection.

* Manuscript torn.

¹⁹⁴ This curious letter is subject to various explanations. Though signed with Allison's name, this copy is not in his hand, and he denied authorship. Allison to Blount, December 24, 1796, in this volume. Why he should have written such a letter is not clear unless he was engaged in a desperate drive for more land. The letter seems to have contributed to Ragsdale's mental collapse. Ragsdale to Blount, October 30, December 12, 1796, and Mary Ragsdale to Blount, January 24, 1797, in this volume.

sale & Retale Lower than aney man or Companey in the uniun[.] you may Purches Every Good Plantation that is for Sale in your Country and git all the Land you can in the Speculating Line and you may count on one Quarter doller Per. acree [2] My Intention at this time is to see your Cuntry Before Christmuss if Possable at which time I hope to See you and Consert Plans most Suitable to Carry into Effect my Intention[.] hint[?] to Mr Carson to give me no more Disapointments in the Land he Sold me as it is much against my Intrust not having the Quantity he Sold me[.] keep this a Profound Secret unless of whome you may find —————* in my Ne[x]t* Shall be more Sattisfactorey which I intend to write from new york from which Citty Intend to embark for Charleston with my Goods Sir I Close in hast as a Jentleman Is waiting Who Passes this to your Cuntry

I am &C

D Allison

G Ragadale Esqr.

Edward Jones¹⁹⁶ to Richard Blackledge [with enclosures]

Hillsborough Oct^r. 10th 1796

Mr. Blackledge desires to be advised if a Sheriffs Sale of Lands on the following Statement be legal under the existing revenue Laws of this State

"Mr Blackledge as agent for a Mr. Allison of Philadelphia gives in a Schedule of certain Lands the property of Mr Allison in the County of Richmond liable for the tax of the Same for the year 1795 Agreeable to Act of assembly the tax thereon not being duly paid[.] the Sheriff distrains the same and *regularly* advertises them for Sale on a certain day, that day arrives and the Sheriff does not sell, but [pos]tpones† the sale to a distant d[ate]† 32 or 33 days afterwards without any other publication or [2] advertisement on which day he sells the said lan[d]s to certain people being the highest bidders . .

* Illegible.

¹⁹⁵ Edward Jones was solicitor general of North Carolina. This letter is a legal opinion based on facts submitted by Blackledge in the enclosure. See also Strother's affidavit of October 15, 1796, and Blackledge Warning, September 23, 1796, in "Other Papers for 1796-1802," in this volume.

† Manuscript torn.

In my opinion the sale is illegal and the sheriff liable to make good all damages sustained by Mr Allison it being a precedent obligation on the Sheriff not to proceed to sell any real property on execution either for Taxes or otherwise untill in the most public place in his Bailiwick he shall forty days at least before the day of sale have advertised the same[.] this Law with great propriety has been construed Strictly and Sheriffs Shall not be admitted to plead ignorance of a Law [u]nder which they divest a [fellow]* Citizen of his property

From the account given me [3] of the Manner in which this Sale of Mr. Allisons lands in Richmond county has been conducted It is my opinion the purchasers cannot hold the lands under it; for Mr Allisons mode or relief, in case of obstenacy in the parties I will at a more leisure hour advise Mr Blackledge, but hope (to save heavy expense) the purchasers will relinquish on being paid their money with Interest

In the mean time however I would advise Mr Blackledge to make a tender of the amount of the taxes due on said lands to the Sheriff[,] to have the money counted as in case of a regular tender to [the]* Sheriff, Mr Blackledge ma[y al]so in a formal manner [hav]e* two Justices of the peace in the County of Richmond [4] protest against the aforesaid Sale, the Sheriff and the purchasers, Mr Blackledge ought also in the name of Mr Allison and for his use hold possession of the Lands and forewarn all others from Trespassing on the same

Ed : Jones

Richard Blackledge esquire

[enclosures]

John Cole to Richard Blackledge

Rockingham July 26th. 1796

Copy

Dear Sir,

I received your letter in which [you] requested me to write to you &c I have advertised your land to be sold at this place on the 21st day of August — on my receiving a receipt from the Treasurer or the money for the tax thereof by that day will stop

* Manuscript torn.

the sale otherwise I shall proceed according to law — The County tax is /8^d. p^r. hundred the parish is /4^d. p^r. hundred with respect I am dear Sir,

Your Ob^t. Servent .
(Signed) John Cole

Richard Blackledge esq^r.
at Raleigh p^r. Post Rockingham
[Raleigh Post Mark]
[No Bill 15 Cents]

Copy Rockingham August 22nd day 1796

Dear Sir:

I have not yet sold your land agreeable to letter I sent you but have postponed the Sale until the 23rd day September next and Should be glad of a receipt from the Treasurer for the amount of the tax thereof or the money by that day — from your

Most Obedient
(Signed) John Cole

Richard Blackledge esq^r
Raleigh
Montgomery C.H. N.C.
12 1/2 Cents —

Amount of Mr. David Allison's tax on two hundred thousand three hundred and twenty acres land in Richmond County for the year 1795.

Public tax	66	15	5	/2
Parish tax @ /4 p. H ^d .	33	7	8	/4
County tax @ /8 p. H ^d	66	15	5	/2
	<hr/>			
	166	18	7	/4

The above land sold at public sales on the 23rd day of September 1796 to Tody Robinson and Henry W. Harrington for the sum of [2] one hundred and Seventy five pounds one shilling for the tax thereof

(Signed) John Cole Sheriff



"Bellefont," the home of Reading Blount on Tranters Creek, about ten miles northeast of Washington, N. C. House completed and occupied about 1800, with a porch only half the width of the house and without the addition in the rear; wardrobes in central section of chimney on both first and second floors. Photograph by Credle Studios, Washington, N. C.

*Gabriel Ragsdale to John Gray Blount*Buncombe October 20th. 1796

Sir

I have done Every thing in my Power to Pay the taxes of [on] the land hear but have failed, I done as much as I Could to Prevale with the Sheriff not to advertise the Land but all to no Purpose he Being Properly under the Influence of our Enimisse [Enemies] hear, and your Brothers not arriving at Knoxville I Could do nothing, they are still ameing at Every thing they Can to Injure us. But if the Taxes Can be Paid thare attemts must be fruitless, I Shall Set out to Nashville in the Cours of ten days to fix the Business I Contemplated doing when I Saw you and I hope thare will be no falure on the Part of B Blackledge or his Brother

I was so fortunate as to Raise the money for Weatherspon and Part of the Surveying money all which I Expected to [have] Recvd. at Knoxville from your Brother, I have Sent forward to Philadephia those Bills drawn on David Allison by your Brother[.] I wrote to Mr Allison & your Brother the Reason why I Sent them forward.

[2] I Recvd some time Since a Letter from Colo [James] Glasgow¹⁹⁶ Informing me our Grants had not yet Passed the Seal, my wish is that you may have the Grants Executed Previous to next assembly as Inquiries have Been made whether the appropriated lands were layed Down as Required by the Governors & Councils Damned fool Resolution¹⁹⁷ and the Present members have Bound themselves to thare Costittuence that they will dam the Speculation in order to be Elected and it is Prover-

¹⁹⁶ For many years one of the most respected Revolutionary patriots, Glasgow was a member of the Hillsboro Convention of 1775 and of the New Bern Committee of Safety in the same year. In 1776 he was elected secretary of state by the legislature, and served for 20 years. A friend and business associate of the Blounts, he was an avid speculator and allowed his strategic office to be used for fraudulent practices by his friends and land company partners. He was indicted for fraud in 1796, resigned his office, and was fined £2000. He moved to Tennessee, where he died in 1820. Thomas P. Abernethy, *From Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1932), 54, 172-176, hereinafter cited as Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*; Wheeler, *Sketches*, I, 73, 81, 86; Blackwell P. Robinson, *William R. Davie* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1957), 313, hereinafter cited as Robinson, *Davie*.

¹⁹⁷ At a February, 1796, session of the North Carolina Council of State, Governor Samuel Ashe questioned the legality of certain grants which were before him for his seal because the grants included many tracts of land in one survey, but only the outside boundary of the survey was carefully and completely delineated. This meant that inside tracts were only mentioned, and, in particular, previously granted (or "appropriated") tracts were not adequately surveyed or described. Concurring with the Governor's opinion that this practice would lead to confusion, litigation, and fraud, the Council resolved to advise the Governor to declare the grants illegal. Council of State Journal, February 24, 25, 26, 1796, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

ble the old Dased fool ¹⁹⁸ may again Be Elected to the appointment of Governor, But the members have bound themselves to to [sic] do things that would Be Out of the Power of the aposel Paul or the Angil Gabriel ware they in the assembly. But you know the whims & Caprice of an Assembly and thare is no knowing what they may do.

I was not Elected owing to my Long absence and not having it in my Power to Counter act the Damned Rascallity of my Elimies & Colo Loves Declining and Proposing me in his Place and my frends made use of my name in that way Before my arval home which I would not Counter act[.] But I told the People I was no Candidate [3] But if they Elected me I would serve[.] I am a Candidate for the appointment of an Electtor and flatter myself I shall be Elected, I am more than Pleased to hear that Grist ¹⁹⁹ is not Elected and is yet in a trance and Believes he is yet Elected[.] I have Entered 200..000 acres more land which I Shall Leave to you the Desposial

Colo Love has Just arrived from Cumberland and is much Pleased with his land. but Says it is Injured by other Lands of Eldder titles, and also Says that it takes a Considerable Part of your Reading [Blount]'s Land or otherwise that they have an Interference. My Respects to M^{rs}. Bloun Reading & Lady, and all friends. I am your Obdt.

Gabl Ragsdale

J G Blount Esqr.

NB tell Dick [Blackledge?] to Live for Ever —

Addressed: John Grey Blount Esqr.

Washington

N Carolina

Colo Glasgow

¹⁹⁸ Samuel Ashe, Governor of North Carolina from 1795 to 1798. In 1797 he actively sought to punish the perpetrators of the land frauds, among whom the Blounts, especially John Gray and William, stood accused. As indicated above, he was hostile to the methods of land speculators and to the Blounts. Samuel Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, II, 152-153; Robinson, *Davie*, 307-309.

¹⁹⁹ Frederick Grist was a political rival of John Gray Blount. A militia general, he served in the House of Commons, 1793-1795 and 1797-1807, and in the North Carolina Senate, 1808-1811. He died December 26, 1811. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 337, 341, 647-649; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 29; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, December 27, 1811.

David Allison to John Gray Blount[Philadelphia?] October 21st 1796

Dear Sir,

I received Your letter of the 7th. respecting the Russell, she is not insured—Enquiries from Liverpool inform us that two Brigs from Washington N^o. Carolina had arrived, the names unknown — one of them with an ill looking head to her, this is supposed to be the Tooley I have not therefore insured on her nor will unless I hear otherwise or you so advise me — W^m Blount set out for N^o. Carolina on Tuesday afternoon by the Waterstages by the Way Baltemore & Norfolk, he takes with him for you some Certificates towit £4789.5.2 Specie & £2639 Currency also bills on the Collectors²⁰⁰ to wit at Wilmington 4000D^{rs}. Edenton 550 Washington 600 which I now inclose the seconds of[,] wishing them safe to you [and] being all I can now do for you—

On monday I send for Raleigh to Mr. Blackledge [2] in his absence J[ohn] Haywood²⁰¹ in one Bundle Certificates and an Order on J. Hogg²⁰² for 3300\$ and about 12,000 in another and without help *I'll be Cursed* if I can do more *and hardly that much* —

You tell me about land lost for Taxes, I cant help it I do all I can to do right if I fail it is not my intention, God knows I have my Troubles here to raise money without means for I have none I do not tell you this by way of Complaint, I will not complain let my fate be what it may provided I can clear those I have induced to come forward

You must have rec^d Halls letter & act^d. before this which gives you the fate of the draft. I do not send it as it can be of no use

When will the Regulator arrive

Your Ob^t Servant

David Allison

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r

Washington

N^o. Carolina

²⁰⁰ I.e., government bills drawn on the collectors of customs.

²⁰¹ Treasurer from 1787 to 1827. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 194, n.1. David Allison to Blount, February 13, 1796, in this volume.

²⁰² John Hogg or James Hogg of Hillsboro. With their cousin Robert they operated a large mercantile firm having offices in Fayetteville, Hillsboro, and Wilmington. John was elected to the House of Commons from Hillsboro in 1794 and 1796. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, II, 651, n.4.

*John Gray Blount to David Allison*Washington Oct^r. 25th 1796

Mr. David Allison

Dear Sir²⁰³

By the Schooner Betsy, Captain Ashley, have Shipped sundries agreeable to Invoice inclosed of which you have two Copies and on one of them is noted the different qualities that you may know how they will Show as I suppose they will Sell by Sample

and that the Coffee may sell to best advantage have sent the proper Certificate to enable the purchaser to receive the draw back ²⁰⁴

By Post I advise you how to dispose of the Nett Proceeds

With much esteem

Yours &c.

John G Blount

Henry Williamson to Mary Fitzgerald ²⁰⁵Washington N^o. Carol^a. Octob^r. 29th. 1796.Dear Niece,²⁰⁶

Your esteemed favor of the 24th June is to hand together with the form of the proper Powers for me to execute which I have accordingly done, and they will be transmitted [to] Mr. Murdock as expeditiously as possible. They will, I hope, enable him to receive the two Sums to which they allude without any difficulty, and as I am assured by my Friends Mess^{rs}. John G. & Thomas Blount Merchants of this place that he is a gentleman to be relied on, have no doubts but the earliest opportunity will be embraced to remit the neat proceeds —

In the meantime I am experiencing their favours, which from My blindness and a large family, I much need.

Should the Court direct the Sums paid me that would be coming to my Brothers, if in life, it will enable me in this country to Settle my children handsomely, a thing, I much wish, but

²⁰³ From the Letter Book.

²⁰⁴ The tariff rebate for goods shipped in the coastal trade.

²⁰⁵ See Mary Fitzgerald to [Henry Williamson], June 24, 1796, in this volume.

²⁰⁶ From the Letter Book.

without that, despair of; However I have [well grounded]* hope from your friendship that nothing will be omitted which can be done for me. — And to enable you the better to collect the Information which will be useful to me, give you all the Information I have respecting My Brothers — John the eldest died at Lisben about 25 Years ago in the house of Mess^{rs} [2] Mayne & C^o. without issue—Joseph went to the East Indies about 44 Years ago & not since heard of by me — Francis died a Midshipman on board the Griffin Man of War at Antigua, Thomas Taylor, Captain, about 24 Years ago — proofs of the death of the first and last may be easily procured.

By your tender to vest the money in the American funds—as well as other Services, I am much obliged — but as I have put the business in some measure under the management of Mess^{rs}. Blounts of this place to whom please in future to direct; shall leave the matter to their management.

I am, Dear Niece
Your affectionate Uncle
Henry Williamson

Gabriel Ragsdale to John Gray Blount

Buncombe October the 30th 1796

Sir

I have Just concluded not to go to the State of Tennessee till after the assembly as I have Every Reason to believe I Shall be Electted an Electtor, and had I have gone thare it would have Prevented my coming forward in due time to Raleigh

I have this day Concluded a Contract with James Wilson for his intrust in the Lands in which you are conserved²⁰⁷ and am to Compleate the Surveying and take out the appropriated lands which I Shall do and bring forward to Ralegh and have Ready to Pass in to Grants, and I Belive Shall Git the full Quantity tho I am not yet Certin[.] Hightower has yet a Design to Caveat the Entryes Last made by Wilson and Carson tharefore it would

* Nearly illegible.

²⁰⁷ Wilson and John Carson were partners in land speculation in which Blount was involved. Carson sold some entries to Ragsdale, probably the "contract" mentioned here. Ragsdale had a mental collapse, did not pay the taxes or complete the entries, and Carson was dunned by the State for fees outstanding. Blount to John Carson, July 20, 1797, in this volume; Blount to Carson, July 21, 1797, in Letter Book. For Carson and Wilson, see David Allison to Blount, January 7, 1796, in this volume.

be well to Pay in the money or Certificates immediately and Let us have an End of the Business if in your Power.

I Believe it Best to Omit taking out Grants for the Warm Spring Land till after the assembly²⁰⁸ as I Believe thare is more land than we have Heartofore thought of in that Quarter

I wish you to tell Ben Blackle[dge] [2] or William I wish to See them at Raleigh or which Ever will go into the marcantile Business with me if I do not if [sic] Point out a Better meathod to make money with more Ease than marchandising.²⁰⁹ I Shall not faile in the Exchang the Whiskey for the Spirits of Turpentine accidents Ex^d. My Best Respets to Reding and his Lady and tell him I fear I shall faile to bring his Gun but not his Spring Lancets, as I Shall not have time to go after her.²¹⁰ as I have not yet gone, as I took the augu and fever soon after my Return hom, and have Just Recovred. which has been the Cause of my not Finnishing the warm Spring Survey. My Respets to Docttor Me-imcey* McKimcey²¹¹ and all acquaintances and in Particular Mrs Blount and family I am G^{abl} Ragsdale
JG Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Washington
North Carolina

Per Post

Mary Blount to [Susannah Harvey]

Dear Sister

November 2 [1796?]

I with pleasure received your letter by last post & was much pleas'd to hear you & Eliza²¹² were well[.] I have bin verry

²⁰⁸ Probably to prevent an attack in the legislature. See Ragsdale to Blount, October 20, 1796, in this volume. The Assembly had earlier investigated and condemned land speculation, including that of the Blounts and Allison. *Journal of the Senate of the General Assembly of North Carolina, Session Held in January, 1795, and February, 1795* (Edenton: Hodges & Wills, Printers to the State, 1795), 48.

²⁰⁹ Possibly a scheme in connection with the curious letter supposedly from David Allison to Ragsdale, October 4, 1796, in this volume.

²¹⁰ Reading Blount was a famous hunter. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 210.

* A slip of the pen.

²¹¹ A William McKenzie (d. 1810) who represented Martin County in the Senate of North Carolina, 1797-1800, was a friend of the Blounts and served with John Gray Blount in the Senate in 1797. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 253; Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 392-393; II, 16-17, 479-480; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina Weekly Gazette*, October 4, 1810.

²¹² Probably a child of Susannah Harvey by her first husband, Augustus Harvey. John Gray Blount was a guardian of Harvey's children. Jacob to John Gray Blount, August 16, 1800, and Mary Blount to Susannah Harvey, [December 7, 1796], in this volume.

unwell since you left this till within a few days past & William²¹³ has not got quite well[.] I shall look for the 25 of this month with pleasure to see you hear again would add to the happiness of my Family. the boys²¹⁴ are & have bin in good health. I have not heard from newbern since last weak & then not particularly from your Moma she has not been sick since she was hear that I have heard[.] they have bin verry sickly & a number died with the yellow fever none of your Acquaintence but Mr John jones that I recollect, I hope you are pleased with Eadenton as Mr Blount²¹⁵ wishes to live there[.] your absence makes this place verry dull to us[.] Lucy²¹⁶ has not bin hear since you left this[;] her Children has all had the Flux[;] Caroline²¹⁷ is the poorest Child you ever saw[,] but are getting better; love without number from my Family to yours I am your affectionate Sister

M Blount

P S Harriott & Olivia²¹⁸ are grown & wants to see Aunt Sukey & Eliza.

James Robertson to John Gray Blount

Nashville November 2th 1796 —

Sir Since peice²¹⁹ have taken plase with the Indians we find survays much Clashing with Each other, for as littel Runing of lines was dun, in time of war as posable, and the Shaney [Shawnee] Country²²⁰ have so deceived people that many hole

²¹³ William Augustus Blount, John Gray and Mary Blount's son. Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*, I, 36.

²¹⁴ Mary's other sons were Thomas Harvey Blount and John Gray Blount, Jr. Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*, I, 36.

²¹⁵ Jacob Blount was to marry Susannah Harvey. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxviii.

²¹⁶ Lucy Harvey Blount, wife of Reading Blount. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxv.

²¹⁷ A daughter of Reading and Lucy Blount. Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*, I, 36-37.

²¹⁸ Harriott has not been identified. Lucy Olivia was Mary's daughter.

²¹⁹ A peace resulting from a reconciliation between the Chickasaw and the Creek Indians in late 1795, and formalized by the United States in the Treaty of Colerain, June 29, 1796. The war was fought over disputed territory and Creek resentment of Chickasaw cooperation with white settlers, and the fighting involved many attacks on white settlements and paralyzed activity in Tennessee. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 131-132; John Haywood, *Civil and Political History of Tennessee* (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1891), 446-464.

²²⁰ An area around the mouth of the Harpeth River, about 20 miles northwest of Nashville on the south bank of the Cumberland River. The name was derived from early Shawnee encampments there, and though the Shawnees were driven out in 1715 by the Cherokees, the land remained an uninhabited battlefield of uncertain ownership until sett'ed by James Robertson about 1779. Subsequently it was the subject both of Indian disputes and land speculation. John Haywood, *The Natural and Aboriginal History of Tennessee*, edited by Mary U. Rothrock (Jackson, Tennessee: Mc-Cowat-Mercer Press, 1959), 206-209, hereinafter cited as Haywood, *Natural and Aboriginal History*; Charles C. Royce, "The Cherokee Nation of Indians," in J. W. Powell (ed.), *The Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1887), 144, hereinafter cited as Royce, "Cherokee Nation."

tracts are lost, if an act of North Carolina do not save them, and it appears to me Just that the assembly should pass an act ²²¹ that such land that are taken By Elder [prior] Rites [rights], may Be removed ²²² on Certificate Being perduced from Cort, and the owners of Such lands, paying the additi[o]nal Expence. I hope sir we will have your Intrust in that Business — [We?]* have perfect peice with Indians, and lands have Risen [gra?]tely* from one to too dollers are givin for harpeth lands per acre — I am D^{er} Sir

your most affetinate

humbel Sevt

John G Blount Esq^r

Ja^s Robertson

Addressed: John G Blunt Esq^r.

North Caronia

Cap Hadley

F. X. Martin to John Gray Blount

[New Bern, November 5, 1796]

Sir,

I saw with great Surprise by M^r Simpson's Letter to me that you told him that M^r Blackledge had no order to accept M^r Tillman's²²³ draft for you & that it was accepted under a condition that it Should be paid by my note in your hands —

You must certainly remember that there was no conversation betwixt you & I, respecting Tillman's draft, except once & that a moment or two ere you set off by the Church gate when I told you I would take a draft on Philad^a. & you Jokingly thanked me. Meaning no doubt that a draft on Philadelphia was *better* than Cash

As to my note, when you demanded payment, I told you I had an acc^t. which came up nearly to the am^t. of it — & if there was a balance due you I w^d. pay it — adding that altho' the note had been due 7 or 8 years I would *not* plead it out of date

²²¹ North Carolina continued to claim jurisdiction over the reservation created in 1783 for the satisfaction of Revolutionary military service claims. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 182-183; William to John Gray Blount, November 7, 1797, n.113, in this volume.

²²² To "remove" a claim was to re-locate it elsewhere by reason of pre-emption or other cause defined by law. Clark, *State Records*, XXIV, 683.

* Manuscript torn.

²²³ John Tillman, a resident of the former Dobbs County. "Census 1790," in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 492.

I imagine that as there was no witness when I said so — You thought *meanly* enough of me to fear I would afterwards deny it

I wished you had done me the favor to have Judged me more honorably & have imagind I would pursue the same line of conduct yourself would have [2] pursued in a Similar instance. However I am more inclined to believe you thought proper to deny me the favor than to consider I had the advantage of it

I inclose my acct. & pray you to Settle the matter on your [own]* Terms & pay Mr. Simpson the balance.

You once kindly promised that if I would find Gov. Blount's acct. you wd. [pressure]† him & [concoct]† means of paym^t. I inclose it & if paym^t. may be made to Mr Simpson I will Consider his receipt as binding on me.

Newbern Nov 5th 1796

I'm Sir

Your Mo. Ob. Ser
F X Martin²²⁴

Addressed: Jn^o. G. Blount, Esq;
Washington

John Gray Blount to François X. Martin

Washington Nov^r. 8th. 1796.

F. X. Martin Esquire
Sir²²⁵

Sometime past, Mr. Simpson,²²⁶ called on me with Mr Tillman's order in Your favour in order to receive Payment

I answered that you and myself had Spoke on that Subject, that I held a Note of Yours and You an acct. against me, and that I had told [2] you that if Mr. Tillman gave an Order on me, I would Settle it in acct^o., and that I would not pay the Order and leave the Note unsettled.

Mr. Simpsom then observed that the Order was accepted by Mr Blackledge for me & Sent him as cash —

I answered that Mr Blackledge had no authority to accept

* Hole in manuscript.

† Nearly illegible.

²²⁴ For Blount's reply see Blount to Martin, November 8, 1796, in this volume.

²²⁵ From the Letter Book.

²²⁶ John Simpson was a prosperous landowner of Pitt County, friend of the Blounts and trustee of Pitt Academy. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 368, n.1.

for me, I had agreed to pay the Order Myself, but would not pay untill the Note, or Such part as was due thereon, was deducted. —

Yesterday Yours of the 5th Inst. was handed me, and from that Discover you are much dissatisfied that I did not pay the Order and leave the Note unpaid, which would have been acting very unlike yourself or any prudent man, whether the same was of recent date or long standing.

You appear to dwell much on your agreeing to pay a Note out of date, which I recollect you made some observation respecting of at the time we Spoke on the Subject; but never having entertained an Idea that you would at any time make an objection on that head, it pass'd off without a Second thought. It has been otherwise with you & from some cause dwelt on your mind or you would have saved Yourself the Trouble of an illiberal observation in your letter.

enclosed is a Copy of y^r. acc^o. as it stands stated in My Books, The balance £18-8-2 1/2 which is paid M^r Simpson [3]

The Charge of £5, in the Suit yet to be try'd is intentionally omitted, as I always hold him a good Paymaster who pays when the work is done.

If the acc^o. is settled to Y^r. Satisfaction please have a copy made, which sign & send me, that we may be each able to prove that we have at this time settled.

W^m. Blount is now in N^o. Carolina & Shall have Y^r. acc^o. that he may direct about it, as he pleases.

I am Your Most Obedt^s.

J. G. Blount

John Gray Blount to Hodgson and Nicholson

Washington N^o. C^{na}. Nov^r. 13th. 1796

Mess^{rs}. Hodgson & Nicholson,
Gentlemen,²²⁷

Our brother William Blount handed us your Catalogue of Goods which you Sell by Wholesale at Bermingham & Sheffield; amongst them are many articles which answer well at this Place, and as we intend to enlarge our Importations so as to

²²⁷ From the Letter Book.

supply part of the retail stores of this Neighbourhood, Wish to be Inform'd respecting your usual Credit, and If Our Order to an amo^t. not exceeding Five Thousand Pounds will be executed timely to be delivered at Liverpool in all the Month of July Next.

If it will, please forward us your address at the different Places, and give such advice that we may not be disappointed in the Exe[2]cution of our Order

We have reason to hope that this Experiment will authorize much larger Orders in future & with Tender of Services at this Place

We are

Your Most Obedt^s.

Jn^o. G. & Thos. Blount

John Gray Blount to Thomas Smith

Washington Nov^r. 16 1796

Capt. Th^o. Smith ²²⁸

Proceed with the Russell as fast as possible into Shell Castle Road, where the Grampus will Speedily as possible deliver you the rest of our Load, when that is all compleated Proceed to Sea, and my present Opinion is that [2] it will be best to proceed to the Island of St Thomas's, and either sell there or at Tortola²²⁹ as you find will best answers, but sell where you will avoid Jews & desperadoes who will run after you to purchase — always enquire for the best Houses & make your contract in writing and be sure to have dispatch if possible.

If Salt is to be had at 1/4 of a Dollar pr. Bus; ballast with it & bring Good Sugar for balance and if Salt is higher, bring 1/3 Rum & 2/3 Sugar for your returns. I do not consider this order binding — You will enquire of all the Vessels that arrive from the West-Indies & proceed to that market that promises the best Voyage — and if you hear that Herrings answer well at anywhere you can go, Take them in at the Castle, and Consult Jack Wallace about the Markets before you sail. But in no case are you to proceed to any English Port in a French Island—or should I suppose Lumber will answer well in any French Port,

²²⁸ From the Letter Book.

²²⁹ St. Thomas and Tortola are in the Virgin Islands chain.

as they have not yet began to improve—So that St. Thomas, St. Bartholomews,²³⁰ Tortola, Barabadoes, Grenada, Antiqua²³¹ or Jamaica must probably be the place therefore clear out for St. Thomas's.

Write me from the Bar for what Place you sail, & write me every opportunity to any [3] Part of the Continent from the place you arrive it; Use Œconomy & make dispatch,

With my best wishes for your Safety,

I am

Yours &c.

Jn^o. G. Blount

*John Gray Blount to William Rhodes, Jr.*²³²

Washington Nov^r. 17th 1796

D Sir²³³

When a man is pushed hard he expects with pleasure to see them from whom he hopes relief[;] so it has been some past with me

My Bond with Lewis for you is some time due, to prevent a Suit which would have deprived me of the right of entering my own goods, I told Keais²³⁴ [?] I would pay when called on but have not yet paid, but told Keais if He was Called on the money should be had, the fact is I have not the money and you must raise it the sum is 418 Dolls & 56 Cents, The Bills are drawn on Keais and out some where, therefore may be hourly expected

I am with wishes for your welfare

Yours &c

J G Blount

William Rhodes, Jun^r.

²³⁰ One of the Leeward Islands.

²³¹ Barbadoes and Grenada are in the Windward Islands; Antiqua is one of the Leeward Islands.

²³² A young sea captain. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 554, n.64, 571-572.

²³³ From the Letter Book.

²³⁴ Probably William Keais, customs officer at Washington. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 611; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, March 13, 1818.

*John Gray Blount to John Wallace*Washington Nov^r. 17th 1796D Sir²³⁵

Until this moment I have entertained a hope that the Captain of the Tuley would have been to hand before I set out for the assembly and the better enabled me to have made my arrangements but I must now make them Without, They are thus[:] The Russell will be down with the Grampus [,] her lighter, when the load is out of her she may be employed until the Tuley arrives if any thing to do, and when she does arrive, Gorham²³⁶ to take the dry Goods & some Crates and come up to enter and take down an officer to See the Salt measured [,] two to Three Thousand bushells of which to be put on Board the Grampus and sent up to Coakley with some Crates of Crockery[,] as she returns She gets a freight back to the Castle from Pasquotank or else where, then run up to Pongo to load for the Tuley, When the Tuley can come over the Swash ²³⁷ she is to come up [2] If 2500 bushells with what salt you may want will lighten her enough for that, the Grampus need take no more, The Tuley is to proceed to the West Indies with Lumber &c.

The Russell is also to go the W. I. but I know not where[,] pray inquire of all who come in where Lumber will answer & there she Shall go, or if Herrings, will answer let her take them at the Castle,²³⁸ We have a report of much Damage at Providence by a Hurricane, If it has been bad, Lumber must be in Demand for it must have damaged the Houses & Cables, ankers, Sails &c. must be cheap, so that a good voyage may be made there[,] pray inquire and direct the Captain of the Russell.

I believe I sent you Homers Letter about his Bill, being protested, you had best attend to geting that money, as several others are returned protested [3] pray direct all my vessells when down there for the best, I set out to Morrow & expect to be back by the 25th or last of Dec^r.

Yours as usual

J G Blount

Jn^o. Wallace Esq^r.²³⁵ From the Letter Book.²³⁶ William Gorham, a Blount ship captain, usually of the "Tuley." Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*.²³⁷ The entrance to Pamlico Sound, over which freight was often transferred by lighters. Alice B. Keith, "John Gray and Thomas Blount, Merchants, 1783-1800," in *The North Carolina Historical Review*, XXV (April, 1948), 199; Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, map opposite 453.²³⁸ Shell Castle, on Shell Island near Ocracoke Inlet. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 56, 213, 596.

*David Allison to John Gray Blount*Philadelphia November 25th. 1796

Dear Sir

On yesterday the Regulator Cap^t. Russell sailed for Washington[;] she could not possibly sail sooner, your Ins[truction]* was duely attended to and every thing as fare as practicable was forwarded you. the account of which I will transmit you by next post — Mr Russel has the origin[al] with him.

I can only say times are with me as usually, very pressing and money more scarce than ever before kn[own.] I have for days been in Treaty for Certificates and am yet uncertain as to the Event, I hope to get them, about £10,000 —

The Jefferson Ticket has carried here with great pushing[;] the Governor was to proclaim it last night — they wish and urge your unanimity in N^o Carolina for Jefferson and Burr as the only way to keep Pinckney and Adams out[.] they promise an unanimous vote here and rely on your and friends exertions to have the same done in North Carolina²³⁹ — Six Votes are promised [2] from the Eastward

I am D^r Sir

Yours &c

David Allison

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Raleigh
N^o. Carolina

* Manuscript frayed.

²³⁹ Eleven of the 12 North Carolina presidential electors voted for Jefferson, one for Adams. The vice presidential vote was split: one for Pinckney, six for Burr, three for favorite son James Iredell, and one each for George Washington and Charles C. Pinckney of South Carolina. Pennsylvania's vote was one for Adams, 14 for Jefferson, two for Thomas Pinckney, 13 for Burr. Edward Stanwood, *A History of the Presidency from 1788 to 1897* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1898), 51, hereinafter cited as Stanwood, *Presidency*.

Joseph Martin²⁴⁰ to John Gray Blount

Richmond V. 26 Nov 1796

Dear Sir/

your Brothers²⁴¹ & their Ladies passt by this a few Days ago all war well . your B W^m advised me to apply to you to Settle a piece of Business for [me] which he undertook but Could not Compleat before he was obliged to [go to] philedelphia, the business I mean is to see that Colo Donaldson Convey to Genl^s Hennian & Ramsey 5000 acres of land for which they have my oblegation, and take up the oblegation. The History of it is, Hennian & Ramsey put into my hands £500 Certificates for which I obliged myself to locate for them one third but being Calld away by the Executive of this State the Day the office was opened, to Cumberland to Treat with the Chicka[saw] Indians²⁴² I put the Certificates into the Hands of Ge[n]* Martin Armstrong²⁴³ Together with Locations to the Amount of 15000 acres of land the prime of Holston all of which he made use off or at least as much as he Chose in his own name without Ever mentioning Hennian Ramsey or myself, notwithstanding I took his Receit for the money mention[in]g the Express purpos [o]f* Entering lands for Hennian & Ramsey which Receit I have. Gen^l Hennian has wrote to me several times that he will Bring suit a gainst me in the feederal Court if the Title is not made shortly. I have beged his Indulgence untill this fall. & if the Title is not made before your assemble Rises I fear he will Bring Suit—Colo Donaldson is consernd with Armstrong in the lands, armstrong has Sundry times Directed Donoldson in my preasants to make the Title, now Sir if you will have the matter

²⁴⁰ Born in Albemarle County, Virginia, in 1740, Martin was deeply interested in western settlement. He was an agent of Henderson's Transylvania Company and of various companies selling land in the Great Bend of the Tennessee River. Long service in the militia and as Virginia's agent to the Cherokee Indians gave him unparalleled opportunity for land speculation, in which he was often involved with William Blount. He died in 1808. Williams, *Lost State of Franklin*, 323-326; Stephen B. Weeks, "General Joseph Martin and the War of the Revolution in the West," in *Annual Report of the American Historical Association For the Year 1893* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1894), 401-477; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, *passim*.

²⁴¹ William and Thomas Blount were on their way to a session of Congress as Senator and Representative respectively. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 56.

²⁴² Chickasaw Treaty of Hopewell of January 10, 1786. Ramsey, *Annals*, 463.

* Manuscript obscured by mending.

²⁴³ Armstrong was a brigadier general of the North Carolina militia and an influential politician of Surrey County. By the 1783 land act he was named surveyor of the land in Middle Tennessee set aside for payment of Revolutionary military service, while his brother John was made entry taker for East Tennessee lands. Thus strategically placed, the brothers became partners of the Blounts in land speculation. Martin Armstrong was also implicated with them in the land frauds of 1798 and was probably a major culprit. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 117; II, 693, n.1; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 50, 118.

settle^d & take up my obligation you Lay me under lasting obligations—your Brother says he will write you on the subject [2]
I am Sur

with Great Respect & Regard
your most Obed Servt
Jos Martin

Addressed: John G Blount Esq
North Carolina
at the Raleigh

John Allen to John Gray Blount

Washington 28th. Nov^r. 1796

Sir

Your letter of the 23^d. Inst^t. has just come to my hands. —

Having already communicated my ideas to you respecting the utility of Opening a Canal from Bay River to Goose Creek the Opening of Pungo Creek to Ropers Swamp and of South Dividing Creek to the mouth of the Gum Swamp and as you are perfectly acquainted with the Situation of those waters I do hereby empower you to render in a report to the General Assembly²⁴⁴ agreeable to Such information as I have already given you and to Sign my name thereto

I am Sir
Your Obed. Serv^t.
Jn^o. Allen

Jn^o. G. Blount Esq^r.
Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Raleigh

Benjamin Atkinson to Benjamin Blackledge

Bensborough Dec^m 7th 1796

Mr. Benjamin Blackledge

Dear Sir I return you my hearty thanks for Entering the goods of Tuly — I have rec^d. a Crate of Crockery (say

²⁴⁴ The last Assembly had named John Allen to report on the expense of making certain rivers and creeks in Beaufort County navigable. *Laws of North Carolina* (Halifax: Hodge and Wills, Printers to the State, 1797), 5.

Queens ware) without any Invoice and there is Two Crates of Stone Jugs lacking. one [of] the Boxes of Glass De[c]anters &c was Broke open & Plundered the Skiper of the flatt saith it was so when he recd it pray Advise me the Truth of it——
 please to let me know your lowes[t] cash price for 1 or 200 Bushels of Liverpool Salt. Mr Ja^s Ross Tells me Liverpool salt is offered by some of your Neigh[b]ours at 6/— I had rather purchase from Mr. Blount then any other Person please to let me know when the Regulator will go to Norfolk—.

Your most obt.

Ben. Atkinson

Addressed: Mr Benjamin Blackledge
 Washington

By Mr Lester

Mary Blount to [Susannah Harvey]

[ca. December 7 1796]

Dear Sister

Your letter came safe to [hand] & am verry happy to hear you were all well. I am entirely alone except the Children[.] Mr Blount has bin gone this three weaks to Raleigh & has not yet returned.²⁴⁵ Major [Reading] Blount has bin hear most of the time since Lucey went to Virginia[;] she set of about the middle of May & was to be home the last of this weak[.] Billy Orr went with her. we have had several reports about Cap^t [Thomas] Smith but none to be believed[;] tis generally be-
 lieved they were lost on the rocks of Bermuda[.] it is truly dis-
 tressing so many Families suffer[.] there was four married men
 in the vessel[;] surely this is the most unfortunate place that
 ever was[.] A number of families intend leaving the town this
 Summer[.] We are to visit the Castle which is not very agreable
 but anything for health[.] I should have wrote you but Mr
 Pattin²⁴⁶ has talkt of going to Eadenton by whom I intended
 writing, Mr. Blount sent to New york for a peace of fine

²⁴⁵ Blount was in the Assembly. Blount to John Wallace, November 17, 1796, in this volume.

²⁴⁶ Hans Patten, a Blount agent and supercargo, and possibly the son of Ann Patten, a widow of Beaufort County. See Patten to Blount, April 25, 1799, in this volume; "Census 1790," Clark, *State Records*, XXI, 126.

—————* for Eliza as there was none hear he was disappointed & did not get it[.] the first opportunity after he returns will send her money to get her what she wants at any time[.] When she wants money write & she will get it as I know you would not wish her to be extravagant now she is young. I have been distracted with the tooth & head ache till within these few days[.] It is bed time & the girls are gone to a play the children join with me in love to their Uncle Aunt & Cousins I am your ever affectionate

Sister

Mary Blount

Gabriel Ragsdale to John Gray Blount ²⁴⁷

at Mr armstrongs 12th [D[ecem]b[er 17]96]

Dear Si^r

I have never Ered intentinally since I had the Honour to be an agent of yours. if I have done so now Pray Consider what has Occatined it and I will Shortly Convince you I am not owt of my Reason, your Business Shall be well arranged Before I go much farther a Stray, to Suffer the Insults of the Enimies['] man is a thing I do not wis[h] So —————† Come down this Evning to Mr Armstrongs Whare you will find me in a cittuation to do more than you have Ever though[t] Me Master of[.] your Council I wish to have as you are the man I would Rather Dye than Desobay I am

Yours

G^{ab} R

JGB.

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr

* Illegible word.

²⁴⁷ This letter indicates Ragsdale's insanity. See David Allison to Blount, December 24, 1796; Mary Ragsdale to Blount, January 24, 1797, and Ragsdale to Blount, March 4, 1797, in this volume.

† Manuscript torn.

*David Allison to John Gray Blount*Philad^a. December 24th. 1796

Dear Sir

I received your favor of the 11th. joined with M^r Blackledges containing information new to me and unaccountable why a letter of mine should drive M^r Ragsdale to such state²⁴⁸ as you describe[.] I have never written M^r Ragsdale any letter containing matter for which I can even blame myself considering the situation of affairs at the time of writing. I have never flattered him,²⁴⁹ I have never written him in Language that should intentionally injure his feelings or give him a moments uneasiness[.] if my letters to him were the cause of uneasiness I would have been obliged to you to have pointed out to me in what particular they had so operated[.] from your description they must have been more replete with *Poison* than I generally write, to have had this effect for I can assure you my correspondence has been but very small with him I believe but two letters ever passed between him and me and I know of no other way he can be ruined by me except by the Bond of Indemnity to Carson & Wilson which was made long before the letter you allude to bears date. and I can further say that no letter written by me of that date could have had such effect on him or any other person. The greatest part of my Correspondence and indeed the only respecting the North Carolina Business has been with yourself and M^r Blackledge [2] and I did not know that M^r. Ragsdale had made any promise to Wilson or Carson until you had so advised me[.] M^r. Ragsdale has not even mentioned it to me himself in anyone of his letters, it was done without my solicitation

In all my North Carolina business I can only accuse myself with inability to send you sufficient relief when wanted to complete the general design

I am with respect

Your Obedient Servant

David Allison

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire

Raleigh

N^o. Carolina

²⁴⁸ See Gabriel Ragsdale to Blount, December 12, 1796, in this volume.

²⁴⁹ David Allison to Gabriel Ragsdale, October 4, 1796 [copy], in this volume.

Murdock MacLean²⁵⁰ to John Gray Blount

[New York, December 27, 1796]

Dear Sir

This serves to inform you that we are in good Health, hoping to find you and yours the same, this is the second time that we have wrote you, since I came here, to which we had no Answer — But if you thought of us, half as much, as we do of you, It would not be so, the kindness that you have shewn to me and My Family I never will forget but always remember with gratitude & thanks be to God, we are now, in a fair way of making a decent Livelihood, and we have always reason to be Thankfull to you, for your help when we could not help ourselves, please to remember my kind Love to Captⁿ M^cDonald my worthy friend, I am informed that My friend M^r Fife has brought his wife to North Carolina, If so, I would wish him here as soon as possible, please tell him that all his friends here are well, M^r Alex^r. Brown has got a young Daughter since M^r Fife has gone away from here — M^{rs} MacLean joins me in Compliments to you & I am

Sir

Your Most. Obed^t. & hum. Serv^t.

Murdock MacLean

New York 27th December }
1796 — }

NB. Direct for me N^o. 294. Water Street New York.Addressed: M^r John Blount Esq^r.

Washington

North Carolina

p^r fav^r. of }
Cap^t. Miles }

David Allison to [John Gray Blount]

[1796?]

Dear Sir

I received your letter of the 24 Ult^o respecting M^r Strothers business[.] in this I can as yet give you no advice as I do not

²⁵⁰ Neither the writer nor any of the persons mentioned in this letter has been identified. The letter is significant as an example of the gratitude of some humble people toward Blount, even while his business practices were criticized by others.

know the demand or price altho it is said some sales have been made at double first Cost and even as high as nine Cents by Mr. Gunn this is report I do not believe it myself — Its demand and advantages arising will depend on some Contingencies with respect to the Spanish Governments, if they should fall into the hands of the French, which is probable, Lands in the West will rise, but even in this case the sacrifice ought to be considered and compared with the profit ——— The Senate did nothing about any lands except a part formerly laid off for the Line of that State²⁵¹ between the Oconie & Oakmulgee which the President is directed to treat for.

I have rec^d your trunk from Mr. Grammer with its contents also the Accounts from Mr. Blackledge which are full and [2] Satisfactory except one charge which is that Mr. Blackledge as my agent ordered the lands entered for the first Company to be transfered to Your name and thus more valuable lands the property of the first became converted to the use of the second Company which when sold commanded a better price of which advantage he claims a dividend ——— and which I swear he shall never get until he changes his conduct and I believe not even then. ——— he denied here that he knew of your sale to me, his letter to Blackledge gives him the lie even as early as January he acknowledges it.

You wrote me some time ago for a Journal & Ledger they will be sent you next vessel, I have a set in the house I now send you if they [will] do I will order no others under your former order.

I am doing my best to arrange for Cash it is damned hard work but I do not despair, If you bear up this Summer and Winter you may rely harvest will [3] be good next year when you shall be permitted to set down peaceably and enjoy the fruits of your Labors.

I hope to be able to send you a View of the prospects I allude to in a Week or two as I am sure they will be highly gratifying to you. — I would have given you a statement of the business before now but it is wound up so much in Mystery as hidden and dark as those of Religion, that I dare not trust many with copying or even dare I make an Entry myself in Books — Thomas who is safe, *perhaps*, wont work — Schenck hasnot been able and when able has had business of his own to

²⁵¹ The military reserve for the Georgia army veterans.

attend to & I am a slave beat about with hard fortune and can't get time — thus stands business now. — Have I ever said to you your Account with J[ohn] B E[vans] & C^o. is balanced[?] if not, I say so now and wish mine was too, but as the period is short when it dies naturally I will hold on to the End it will average me clear of trouble about [4] twenty thousand dollars.

With respect & Esteem

I am

Your ob^t Servant

David Allison

LETTERS FOR 1797

Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount

Princeton 1 Jan^y. 1797

D^r Sir

The Schooner Grampus is not yet arrived here, She got to Edenton Sixteen days ago[.] the Captain went on shore to try to get a freight to the Bar and to repair an Anchor that was broke, which M^r. Jacob Blount done for him. The Westerly Winds has prevented his geting up here, indeed the River has been frozen up for Several days. In all my life I never knew Business so dull here, for, there has been nothing at Market this Fall, their is a great many Northern Speculators come to the Boro.¹ this Fall with a great many Goods and they have made many Sacrifices to force the Sale of their Goods, they have Sold Turks Island Salt for 3/6 Virg. M^y. [Virginia Money] and other things in [pro]*portion & gave 20/ [V]^s M^y. for Corn 1 1/2 doll^s. for Tar, 1 1/2 doll^r. for Pease & 8 doll^s. for Pork, which has really distracted the Planters so that they are afraid to part with their Produce at any price, they even will not pay their debts unless they are Compelled to do so by Some process of Law. I shall endeavour to sell the Salt to the Fisher Men for barrel fish & make the best bargain I can with them.—My Sloop Hope met with a Gale of Wind in the Gulph which Occasioned

¹ The borough, i.e., Murfreesboro, a town near the former site of Princeton.

*Manuscript faded.

her to throw Over her Deck Load & I am told she has met with Considerable damage, I have not seen her since she returned, I waited at Washington [2] sometime for her, but she did not get up, while [I was]* there, On my being determined to leave Washington I consulted with Ben Blackledge what I had better do respect^s. the Sloop, he told me it wou'd be out of his power to Attend to her as he had the Tooly and other vessels of yours to Attend to, and recommended Capt. Ross² as a fit person to Attend to the business for me, in Consiquence of which I gave Capt. Ross my Orders respecting the same.—

Mr. Collins had the Sloop Insured at Philadelphia for me against all risk at 15 or 20 PC^t. that depended on the Quantity of Ports she went to in the West Indies. You will oblige me very much if you will see Capt. Ross and know if the necessary Steps has been taken to enable me to recover the damage and if it has [not been]* done to have it done for me, and to Advise Capt. Ross for the best respecting the Business. Capt. Ross has Directions to Swap or Sell her, you can see my Orders by applying to Capt. Ross for them.—The Bearer herewith my Negro John Carries on, for the purpose to take care of the Sloop with any other Person that Capt. Ross may have on Board of her; I have wrote Capt. Ross by him also. Expecting to see you in Washington Shortly (for nothing keeps me from coming on but the arrival of the Grampus) I remain D^r Sir—

Your Ob^{dt} Hble Servt
B. Coakley

P. S:

I hope you will direct Capt. Ross to do with
the Sloop Hope for me as if she was your own }

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r.

Merch^t.

Washington

P negro John

* Manuscript faded.

² Henry Ross served as supercargo as well as captain for numerous Blount shipments. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 47-49, 172-173.

*Nathan Tisdale to John Gray Blount*New Bern Jan^y. 5th 1797

Sir

I take the liberty to address a few lines to You. I have been inform'd You wish to employ a person to make bricks sufficient to build a la[r]ge House, I can make them (if your Clay about washington is as good as ours & I suppose it is) nearly as good as any you have seen from the Nor-w^d, that is to say smooth & read, as hard as Clay will burn. now Sir if I thought I cou'd be successfull in establishing a brick Yard in Washington & have sale for 500000 good bricks as fast as I cou'd make them, at the going price, I woud immediately remove my Family & settle myself in *Washington*[.] Do me the Favour to write by the Bearer of this & let me Know Your opinion of the business (I woud altho' a Stranger) [2] be guided by Your good Judgment, If You will do me this Favour I shall ever be Your Most Obdt & greatfull Hbl Sert—

Nathan Tisdale

P. S.

If You encourage me
I will Immediately on the recei't of your letter set out for Washington

N T

I shoud also wish to carry on my trade of watch making &c.

Addressed: John Blount Esq^r
Washington

Pr Boy
Tom

Moses Thompson to John Gray Blount

Buncombe County swannanoa River Jan: 16th Day 1797

Dear sir

I understand t[ha]t * you are Desirous to employ some man in this County t[o fin]ish * your surveying which Mr. Ragsdaile was to do[.] I know myself of one line which is to do[;] that is to Run from the Mouth of Twelve mile Creek of pigeon River

* Hole in manuscript.

a Direct Line to the Paint[ed] Rock on french broad River which line Mr Ragsdaile made an absolute agreement with me to Run the same as their was no other man knew the Begining Corner & course of the country as well as I do[;] but as he is Deprived of his Natural Reason³ that contract will be void[.] I have surveyed a large scope of your land in this country & if you see fit to Employ me to do your Business in surveying I will do it with as much Accracy & Expedition as any other Perhaps & upon as Low Terms[.] I will Run that line from Twelve mile to the paint[ed] Rock & find Chain bearers & Provisions for one Hundred Dollars which I cannot do it in less time than twenty Days[.] I have Run all your land that lies in that quarter of this county on the south west side of french Broad River[;] that line as Mr Ragsdaile Enformed me Was to dis[c]over what land belonging to Mr Dollison [Donelson] lies in that survey & Sir I made several Entrys in the Bounds of your Entrys By Mr Ragsdailes permission Which both me and many others have paid our money for[.] we would be Happy in Knowing Whether we may have any sur[e]ty* for our Land or not[.] & so Mr Rags[dale] is about fifty pounds indebted to me for the surveying of your land which I expect to loos Except you can procure some Way for me to get it[;] as you have [all] of his property in your hands you perhaps can procure so much as will satisfy my Demand & any surveying you have to do in this Country if you see fit to Employ me I will do it upon as low terms as any other[.] pleas to Write to me by Cap^t. Patton, I am with Respects your obedient servant

Moses. Thompson

Mr Jn^o. G Blunt

Addressed: Mr John Blunt

per Cap^t.

John Patton

³ See David Allison to Blount, October 4 and December 12, 1796; Gabriel Ragsdale to Blount, December 12, 1796; and Mary Ragsdale to Blount, January 24, 1797, in this volume.

* Hole in manuscript.

John Carson⁴ to John Gray Blount

Garden Hill

Mr John G Blunt

Dr Sr

January 24th: 1797

The tax of your Land in Buncombe for the year 1795 was 788..18..9 and the tax on 496.640 acres I paid amounting to 356 pounds 19 S. 4^d the balance was Sold and I bought it for £42 18/ 2^d including the Sheriffs fees[.] The Sheriff Signed your Deed and I had it acknowledg^d. by him in Court and [he] has left it with the register to have it registered and Shall Wate your Orders to Send it to you by Post or otherways

I have taken all necessary receipts in your favour Which I shall forward With the Deed, the Sheriff Was frendly and honoust in all his proseedure for which he Was much blamed by the people who had attended with an intention of purchasing the Land in Small parce[l]s Which might have been don had I not been there

A Gentleman known by the name of Josua Williams⁵ offered to pay the tax on the hole for a few 640 acre tracts and Let him point them out[.] he is a man of bigg Words but a small purs & little Wit, he sets up for high Sheriff of Buncombe this year and may get it by giveing his bond Conditioned to be a damb^d. raskle in dureing his Sheriffs Ship Which he Can do With eas, and I think Will Continue to be Won [one] all his Life

I rec^d your Letter & Land Law⁶ by Col^o. Porter which Gentleman I Could not oblidge in the money he Wanted and I asure you I was Sorry for it as I Conceive him to be a good man. If there had been any of you'r [2] money left I should have lent it to him but poverty disapoints meny a good intention

I have red the Land Law & thinks it the best that Could be made as I know the times was dificult[.] Mr Ragsdale has not yet Come home and When he dos I expect to receive no part of What he owes me therefore you Will pleas remember your as-

⁴ For Carson see David Allison to Blount, January 7, 1796, n.11, in this volume; Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 656-657, 661-663; and Mary Ragsdale to Blount, January 24, 1797, in this volume.

⁵ The Buncombe County surveyor for a rival speculator, Cathcart Stedmore. Williams was a member of the North Carolina Senate in 1800 and 1801. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 562; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 54.

⁶ Political pressure against land speculators resulted in three land laws in 1796, one of which John Gray Blount had introduced in the North Carolina Senate. Although the result of anti-speculator forces, the laws nevertheless contained several important features favorable to the speculators. *Journal of the Senate* [1796] (Edenton: Hodge & Wills, 1797), 17; *Laws of North Carolina* [1796] (Edenton: Hodge & Wills, 1797), 4-6, 7-9, 16-17.

sumpset ⁷ to me for 8.664 Dollers, some gentlemen in this Country talks of attaching in your Land for debts we ows them

Col^o. W^m Davidson I seen at Buncombe Court on the 17th Instant who related his distress and says Ragsdale paid him at our September Term [of 17]96 but seventy one or two pounds not Withstanding I Sent Ragsdale for that purpes 172 pounds

Shortly after you receive this I hope to here from you And if there is any thing to be don about the Land State it to me I am in Sciethers [Skitters] whether to return the Land for tax or not — I Should rather you Would make an Agent of Col^o D[avid] Vance⁸ to return the Land in D. Allison's name and to see that Wilsonon [sic] & me transfers to Allison, both on the Entry takers Books & on the back of the Warrents, if that is don I think business would go on easier in buncombe—and the County tax not be so high a nother year⁹

Your frend

John Carson

John G Blunt

[3] P.s I am very hapy Col^o Vance is one of Commitioners to run the Line between us & the Tenecy State as I Conceive him to be Suteable but as his Constitution is Weak I fear he will not live to be one at the finishing of the business

Jo Carson

Addressed: John: G: Blunt Esqr

Washington

Post — North Carolina

Mary Ragsdale to John Gray Blount

[Buncombe County] January the 24th Day 1797

Mr J G. Blunte

Dr. Sir after Condoling on my Husbands Insanity with which I am Informed you are not unacquaint,d my apprehentions is all so Alarm'd in another manner and the Disagreeable Sound of

⁷ A business agreement not formalized by a seal; also a promise. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 157.

⁸ A founder and resident of Buncombe County who finished surveying the North Carolina-Tennessee boundary. John P. Arthur, *Western North Carolina: A History (From 1730-1913)* (Asheville: The Edward Buncombe Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, 1914), 38-51, hereinafter cited as Arthur, *Western North Carolina*.

⁹ The tax rate evidently reflected local antagonism toward large absentee landholders.

the feet of the Sheriff has also been heard at the door[.] his [Ragsdale's] Exalted thoughts Concerning trafic has caused Some Very Extravagant Ingagements from which I find it Exceedingly Imbarrassing to Extricate myself from [:] a Purchase that my Husband made from Col^o Carson and James Wilson of some notes on M^r David Ellison [Allison] to the amount of 14-000 Dollars for which I underStand he has given or is to give 8000 Dollars¹⁰ & my Husband has Purchased Several Valuable Plantations in this county and has taken obligations from the People from whome he made the Purchases for the Conveyance of the Same and has given his own obligation for the Payment of the money agreeable to the contracts and I understand that some of the obligations for conveyances is made Over to said Carson & Wilson which I understand was Received in Part Pay for Ellison notes[.] and now the People from whome these Land Purchases was made seem very much Alarmed knowing my husbands Property not sufficient as suits at law is Dayly Expected to be brought for the Recovery of said Lands. I have heard that you have got all M^r Ellisons notes but one in your own Possession which note I have in my Possession and if you think M^r. Ellisons Notes is not worth more then Eight thousand Dollars Please to send them back by the Bearer Capt John Patton that I may return them to Carson & Wilson and [2] Recivd the contract — and Sir Previous to my Husbands Leaveing home he had a Conditional obligation on yourself for 10-000 Dollar^s which I hope you will Condecend to let me know What Part of them conditions is yet to Purform & on my Husbands Part[.] if there is Surveying to be done it is in my Power to have it Done in as Short time and by as Proper Persons as the Nature of the case will admit or Require—

I have made freequent application to M^r. James Wilson who was with my Husband at Raleigh but can get no Information as to the manner in which he conducted his business there or how his business are situated with you in any measure whatsoever therefore I have thought Proper to make the Present application to you[.] my Husban[d] has Paid three Hundred and twenty one Pounds on the Bond that was gave to Capt John Patton the County Surveyor for a Deputation to Survey your Land and Borrow.d the money of several of his friends¹¹ some of which

¹⁰ For other Ragsdale transactions with Carson see Ragsdale to Blount, October 30, 1796, in this volume.

¹¹ For the Patton bond see Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 656-57. Among the creditors was Carson. Blount became liable for some of these debts, to the amount of over £500. John Gray Blount Papers, 1816, *passim*.

are Ill able to lay out of the use of their money and it is not in my Power to Pay the money without I Can Receive it from you——

You will Receive this letter from the Hands of Capt Patton who is a gentleman of varrassity and Confidence to whome I Refer you for a minute Relation of my Cercumstance[.] I hope you will Condescend so far as to write me by the Bearer the true Situation of the Contracts between you and my Husband and the manner in which you wish your business to be done that my Husband is to do for you & Conclude your Most Hum^b & Very Obed^t. Sear^{vt}

Mary Ragsdale

John G Blunt Esq^r

Addressed: John G. Blunt Esq^r
Washington

fav. by
Mr Patton }
}

John Gray and Thomas Blount to William C. Lake

Washington January 26th. 1797

Mr. William C. Lake
Sir¹²

Yours of the 28th. September by the Tuley, Capt. Gorham arrived safe together with the Shipment, on the 18th. November all in good order.

The Salt, Linens and Callico [2] unusually high; the Blankets and fine cloths were good at the price.

We find some little in lack and error as stated at foot.

The amount of the Mooring anchors & chains which Capt. Ross & Yourself were pleased to take so much trouble about, will be too much to spend on experiment; You will therefore please take no order about them and excuse the Trouble you have had.

We were more fortunate with the two cheeses which you sent than you were with the Bl. of Hams which through negligence were brought back amongst the Ship Stores; a circumstance at which we were the more mortified as they proved

¹² From the Letter Book.

excellent on their return: the cheese was good and accepted with Thanks.

We are in America kept in constant allarm about the French capturing our Vessells bound to British Ports: should these reports prove true, either an Embargo which is probable will then take place, or the great risque our Vessells will run of being taken will deter us from sending to Liverpool this Spring: unless we should learn that the advan[3]ced price of Produce will reimburse us the additional ensurance.

We are very desirous of receiving your Acc^{ot}. as we are about to settle & close the business transacted under our present Firm.¹³

Mr. Amos Johnston requests us to inform you that his goods arrived safe except two Crates of Crockery much pillaged, for which he supposes some Person accountable, and Cap^t. Horton informs him the embezzlement took place on the Quay at Liverpool; He complains some of the prices of his Goods, but acknowledges they are as well laid in as them shipp'd to his neighbour Atkinson by Mess^{rs}. Gilchrist & Barry

We are with much esteem

Y^r. Most Obd^t

J. G. & Th^o. Blount

10 doz: Ivory Combs charged

£14.5..

@ 28/6 p doz: & extended

{	the quality little, if any, superior to them charged @ 6/—p. doz:	}
---	---	---

10 doz: Handsaw Blunts but

only 5 doz: came @ 1/8

6 doz: 7 Inch Pitsaw Files

Invoiced & only 5 doz: found @ 4/—

J G & Th^o. Blt

¹³ No further mention of this dissolution or reorganization of the firm of John Gray & Thomas Blount has been found.

*Hugh Williamson to John Gray Blount*New York 2nd Feb^r 1797

Dear Sir

Your Draft of 26th Oct^r. for Dlrs 1550 on David Allison and by him accepted was protested the 28th Dec^r. for non payment. The Holder of the Bill Jac Joné came to this City with your Brother William six Days ago. Your Brother it seems had promised by some means or other to get him the Money, and being disappointed in raising it here by the means he expected, he explained the Embarrassment to me two Days ago. I had no Cash in Hand except what was proper for necessary & contingent Expences, but it was clear that the Money must be had. Joné seemed to be greatly distressed and alledged that no Damages he could expect would compensate his Disappointment. It became necessary to borrow, which is a bad Business at all Times and at this breaking season¹⁴ is almost a hopeless one. I knew a Citizen who generally has the command of Cash, on him I called, and reported immediately that the money could be had, the Terms too as cash goes not the hardest, but hard enough Viz 2 1/2 pCt. for the first and 2 pCt. the 2nd Month, my note being given for Payment. Your Brother pray'd me to relieve him from the French Man who haunted him like a ghost. He is paid and the Bill and Protest are in my Hands. I would not deposit them for security, for I wished to prevent them from being hawked [2] about as such Incidents to mercantile Men are never agreeable.

I expect to return to Philad^a in 6 or 8 Days from this Time to which Place you will be so good as [to] make the Remittance for the Bill.

Though you will naturally be desirous to make an early remittance that Subject to myself may prove very interesting. Some advances that I have made to your Brother and others that will probably be necessary, to prevent a Loss to him of a very large Property,¹⁵ may render it extremely inconvenient for me to pay the Amount of that Bill at a short Notice should it be demanded.

¹⁴ This was the beginning of the 1797 panic, caused by over-speculation. John S. Bassett, *The Federalist System 1789-1801*, Volume XI (1906) of *The American Nation: A History from Original Sources by Associated Scholars*, edited by Albert B. Hart (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1904-1918), 198, hereinafter cited as Bassett, *The Federalist System*.

¹⁵ William Blount's financial affairs were slipping into the bankruptcy that accompanied the discovery of his political "conspiracy." Masterson, *William Blount*, 314-316.

I most sincerely hope that before this time my good friend
M^{rs} Blount has fully recovered her Health. I am

Dr Sir With great Respect
your obed Serv^t
Hu Williamson

John G Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John G Blount Esq^r.

Washington

N: C^a:

John Gray Blount to Captain J. L. B. Monyard

Washington Febr^y. 8th. 1797

Capt. J. L. B. Monyard

Sir,¹⁶

I understand you are about to proceed to St. Thomas and probably may find there the Brig Russell which was lately carried in Cape Francois & condemned for having been to a British Port.¹⁷ By that condemnation I see the commission of the Cape¹⁸ alledge that they do so under an Order of the Directory¹⁹ which says that neutral vessells shall be treated as they suffer the British to treat them — Now I have never understood that the British have in any Instance, even before the late Treaty condemned a Vessell, with Lumber only, from America to to [sic] any French Port not declared blockaded or from one French Port to another if they had nothing on board but Lumber — Having been determined to avoid any cause of capture, I declined putting any naval Stores on board and strictly enjoined Capt. Smith not to proceed to any English Port in a French Island, but left him otherwise at discretion to do the best. And I really confess I am more mortify'd at the friends of the British having it in their power to rejoice at my loss, than I am at the

¹⁶ From the Letter Book.

¹⁷ The "Russell" was seized within the first 14 hours of a voyage from New Providence, Bahama Islands. Alice B. Keith, "Three North Carolina Blount Brothers in Business and Politics, 1783-1812" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1940), 197-198, hereinafter cited as Keith, "Three North Carolina Blount Bro'hers." For subsequent events see William Wallace to Blount, February 17, 1797; and Alexander Hamilton to Peter Schermerhorn, June 26, 1797, in this volume.

¹⁸ French Commissioners at Cape Francois (Cap Haitien), who directed the seizure of American vessels if loaded with contraband or if bound to or from an English port. Allen, *Naval War*, 35.

¹⁹ The constitutional executive of France, 1795-1799. The order referred to was that of July 2, 1796. Allen, *Naval War*, 298.

loss itself; as Tom Blount has been an uniform friend to what is in Congress called the French Interest and opposed to the late Treaty with England.²⁰ [2]

I now have to make the best I can of the Business, and am sending out a small vessell to enable me to purchase her, if they will take the value of her at that place.

I Shall be glad to hear from you, if any oppertunity offers.

I am your Most Obed^t.

J. G. Blount

John Gray Blount to Captain Warren Ashley

Washington Febr^y. 8th. 1797.

Cap^t. Warren Ashley

Sir,²¹

Inclosed is Bill Lading for 100 Bbls Pork & some Naval Stores Shipp'd you by request of Mr. Benj^a. Atkinson —

Cap^t. Ryan who commands the Regulator is a Young Cap^t. and a Young Man. I shall therefore be much obliged to you to dispatch him, & if necessary, advise & hurry him, as I am very desirous to have her back; He has on board a few Shingles put in to Stow the Cargo — Please advise him to the best Sale & inform him where he can procure about 50 Bush^s. Oats which I want to Sow.

I am

Your Most Obed^t.

J. G. Blount.

Inclosed is a Bill Lading for 50 Bbls Pork Shipp'd by request of Mr. Amos Johnston.

J. G. B.

²⁰ Jay's Treaty, ratified, after anti-administration opposition, in June, 1795. Samuel Flagg Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1936), 100-104, hereinafter cited as Bemis, *Diplomatic History*.

²¹ From the Letter Book.

William W. Wallace to John Gray Blount

Shell Castle 17 February 1797

Dr Sr I have this Day arived in the Schooner Success from the Cape in 12 Days passage after Being imbargowed 26 Days after the Date Capt Smith left that place. I am sorrey to inform you that Brig Russell was sold²² for the paltry sum of sixteen hundred Dollars to a Northardman [Northern man] and know [now] is ready to sale for New York[.] I Did not know what to do about Buying her in[;] I could not make it convenient for the want of cash and thay [the French] still make it [a] rule to carry in & condemn all aMearicans Bound to any English port[;] tho I never saw French privateer after I left the Cape but there was four [British] sail of the line Crusing of[f] the Cape for the Fre[n]ch and had taken a french fifty gun Ship and there was no armed vessell of any form at the Cap[e] when I left that place[.] I have made a bad voyage this time but owing to the french a fault in them²³ [.] I am now going to Newbern I am Ever with

Respect Yours.

W W Wallace

Addressed: Mr J G Blont
Mcht
Washington

B. Cousin²⁴ to John Gray Blount

Washington February 22^d.
1797

Jn^o Gray Blount Esq^r.

Sir,

It has been for sometime past my Settled determination to go & live in Louisiana; which by several concurring circumstances I am induced to execute, or at least undertake, without more delay. I beg you to excuse the abrupt manner in which I leave you, I choose it as the least painful to me, & hope you will do me the justice to view it in that light—

²² After French capture. See Blount to Captain Monyard, February 8, 1797, in this volume.

²³ I.e., the fault lies with the French, not with me.

²⁴ This letter is an indication of the esteem in which John Gray Blount was held by at least one of the many apprentices whom he took into his home at Washington.

Indeed I leave your House with as much concern as I shou'd my father's; such are the Sentiments of attachment & gratitude that your goodness has produced in me & with which I am very respectfully,

Sir,

your most obed^t Servant
B. Cousin

Addressed: Jn^o Gray Blount Esquire.

M^r Benja. }
Blackledge }

Gabriel Ragsdale to John Gray Blount

Sir

Dansvill Virginia

March 4 1797

I have just arived hear on my way home and had it not in my Power with Convenience to call on you as I have once more duly Considered the ill Consequences that may attend the mercantile Business²⁵ as Peace and Tranquillity are the only objects which I now have in View[,] as I find that Even the Prospect of We[al]th with a fellow Cittizen will run Some men out of Thare wits to find and how and in what manner it is acquired tho with the Greatest kear & Deligence [2] as well as the Strictist Honesty & & integrity

you will keep in your hands the Notes on allison as well as those with your Self²⁶ as I am able to wate for the first Payments 4 or ——* months or at Least till I come down which will be in the Cours of this [Y]ear I have my Business so aranged as to Leave home as I am now Determined to try to find an assilum in Some Part of the world whare no Parson knows or Ever heard of me tho not affraid to meet the who[le] univers of mortals on the faire & upright [p]rinciples of Honesty & integrity [3] and Should I dy the Poorest on Earth I Shall have the agreable Reflecttion of knowing I have never told a lye to Decoy or deceive aney man

The [Tho] I Left home as well as Raleigh with but Little money I am blest with Plenty [to] go whare I will for Various Discoveryes which I have made Since I left the Persicuteing

²⁵ The mercantile plan mentioned in David Allison to Gabriel Ragsdale [copy], October 4, 1796; and Ragsdale to Blount, October 30, 1796, in this volume.

²⁶ See Mary Ragsdale to Blount, January 24, 1797, in this volume.

* Manuscript torn and illegible.

Citty whare frendship was Denied me by allmost Evry & all those I took for my frends

in stea[d]e* of Beging my Existance or in other words my Cestinance I have [4] Lived Bountifully tho not with my Relations thanks be to the Greate ruler of the univerce whose ready agency I have Ever Experinced

I [am] told that Mr Hodge the Printer²⁷ has insirted in his Jornals that I was Delirious[.] had that have been the [sic] my onhappy Cittuation it was none of his Business to have inserted it without the advice of those who Pretended frendship to me

as that no doubt may have Seemed to increas the oneasyness of the best of Companions as was amed at by those infurnal men [5] who followed me like bloodhowns to Raleigh to report I was out of my Reasons for thare accursed & wicked Purposes Whose blood I will assuredly Sheed Should they Ever insult me again tho that alturnitive will be the last of my wishes.

tell young Mr Blount who was a member at Raleigh²⁸ to take Gode Kear of my Sorril mare that [I] Left with him at Raleigh as he shall be well rewarded for So doing Likewise tell Mr Gorahm to keep in his Possession & take kear of my Little [6] Chickkasaw as I will dy but I will have all the Property that is mine tho Sold by Wilson & Carson Contrary to my will or Consent.

Should you have aney Business to do Rite by Post or Send Express and I will Stand forward as your agent till I See you & then I am Detirmed to make a final finish of all Business that Shall [a]gain Leade me from my Lovely family Whose Pease & Quiettude to me is more than worlds [7] of we[al]th & Troubles

my Respets to B Blackledge Reading & all frends and tell them I am Shorly alive & in Perfect helth Thanks be to the almighty I am

G^{abl}. Ragsdale

J G Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John Grey Blount Esq^r

Washington

N Carolina

Per Post at Hallifax

* Manuscript torn and illegible.

²⁷ Abraham Hodge, State printer from 1788 to 1801 and publisher of the *North Carolina Journal* at Halifax. He was also involved in at least five other printing firms with presses in New Bern, Edenton, and Fayetteville. Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, II, 104, 140, 177; Stephen B. Weeks, *The Press of North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century* (Brooklyn: Historical Printing Club, 1891), 39ff.

²⁸ A William Blount represented Perquimans County in the North Carolina House of Commons in the session of 1796. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 342.

*Hugh Williamson to John Gray Blount*Philad^a. 8th March 1797

Dear Sir

Near 5 weeks ago I wrote you that I had taken up your Draft on Dav^d Allison for \$1550, having been obliged to raise the Cash from Money Dealers on Shaving Terms. The Thoughts however of leaving my Note as security in the Hands of a Levite did not accord much with my feelings as I might p Chance be called on in 30 Days; wherefore before I left New York I made out by ways & means to raise as much Cash as was Sufficient to take up my Note. Of this Circumstance which I mentioned to your Brother W^m when I returned here, he may probably have given you Notice. I should have done so myself sooner, but that I was taken ill and have been confined to my Bed or Chamber for a considerable Time. I have some thoughts of coming to Carolina as soon as I am able to travel [2] with the Expectation of being able to finish my Business there before the warm Weather sets in. If it should chance that any Remittances should be made to me here before I see you at Washington I shall instruct Jos: Anthony & Co to take up all Letters to me directed & keep them or receive any Payments that any Person may be disposed to make them for my Use.

I am D^r Sir

With great Respect

Your obed^t Serv^t

Hu Williamson

Jn^o G: Blount Esq^r:Addressed: John G Blount Esq^r

Washington

N: C:

*Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount*Princeton 28th March 1797

Dear Sir

I have wrote to Mr. Anthony of Philadelphia respecting the Sloop Hope—I expect you have started a small Vessell loaded with Salt round here ere this, I shall send to General Bakers tomorrow six or seven Hundred Bushels Salt from here, the

Boat that comes round must stop at Bakers fishery[,] Saye Sumners place[,] and deliver as much Salt as will compleat my Contract with Baker, and then proceed on here with the Balance and I shall load her back with Corn &c as you may direct, write me the price for Bacon at your place, You will oblige me very much if you will inform me on the receipt of this the latest information you have got respecting the intention of the French against us, in particular respecting their cruisers in the West Indies interference with our Vessels—I am loading the Dolphin as I inform'd you with an assorted Cargo for Antego [Antigua], and shall send her on unless you advise me to the Contrary [2] I expect you will give me your advice & information respecting it.—If the Tooley goes to Europe this Spring I should be glad to get an assortment of Fall Goods in her and would make out a list of such Goods as would suit this place—

I am Dr. Sir

Your mo. Ob^{dt} Serv^t

B. Coakley

Addressed: John G Blount Esq^r.

Merchant:

Washington

Free B Coakley

Mail

Mary Blount to [Susannah Harvey]

April 1 [1797?]

Dear Sister

You are excusable in not writing as you have had such a round of visiting but hope you will find time to write oftener as it affords us pleasure to hear from you. Sally _____* you heard was married. she is. they dancet at the old Ladys & her Brothers din'd at Mr Brickels [and?] spent _____† evening with me[;] they have not gone to [Tar]†borough[;] they are to go next weak[.] we have had Major Long & Lady[,] M^{iss} long & M^{iss} Pasture on a visit to M^{rs} Wrodes[.] they were all agreeable & clever[.] there has bin a number of dances in town

* Illegible.

† Manuscript torn.

this winter[.] Lucy [Blount] & Family are well as we are[.]
Mr Blount has this day set of for newbern[.] with love from my
Family to yours

I am your's affectionately
tell Eliza the Children
all want to see her as does
her Aunt

M Blount

John Wallace to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

Shell Castle April 8th. 1797

Dear Sir

I send you the Dementions of the Castle Store, and am anxious to hear from you to hear about my Corn as I am all most out, and my father is Quit[e] out—no news hear. We are all well at the Castle. britt is in the Road and tells Wise that I sent this morning to Carry him out[,] that he is two sick to go to Sea to Day. but I am afraid he [is] afraid to go

In hastes

Yours

John Wallace

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr,
Washington

[enclosure]

9 Feet from Floor to Floor
20 feet in Width
3 feet 8 Inches from plate to plate
40 feet in Length that [?] 12 feet 8 Inches
14 1/2 feet Rafter State [?] Wall
14 1/2 feet wind Beams
Plates 9 1/2 Inches by 4.

*Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount*Princeton 14th April 1797

Dear Sir

By Capt Baum you will receive four Hh^{ds}. Tobacco and two Hundred & thirteen Barrels Corn measured in, but expect it will measure out at least two Hundred and twenty five Barrels as he had good measure—

I have given him orders to take in from Eighty to one Hundred Barrels fish, at Williams's and Baker's fisheries, as they are there ready for him; and to give his Receipt for what he receives, I received from him Six Hundred & Sixty one & a half Bushels Salt, his Salt fell short Thirty eight & a half Bush^{ls}.

I have sent by him also one Hundred & Sixty two pieces Bacon weighing two Thousand & sixty pounds to pay off a Little Note of mine to Leroy, which I hope you will attend to, the Inclosed Letter to Leroy is on the subject, he must allow you sixteen pence per pound for the Bacon, in payment of my note which is Two hundred & fifty two Dollars or thereabou[ts]* and the Balance you may receive from him in Money or the Bacon——You must have a Vessel round by the 10th of may next certain, that will carry at least four Hundred Barrels. She must Come to Gen^l. Baker's Fishery and there Stop, the Captain must get a Horse and come up to me, or send up to me, for I wish to attend in person to receive the Fish, as I think it is really necessary, I wish the Vessel could be at Bakers Fishery by the last of the Month, as the Fish will be all ready by that time, at least I expect so—

I am D^r SirYour Mo Obd^t Hb^l. Serv^t.

B. Coakley

Addressed: John. G. Blount Esquire

Merchant

Washington

Capt. Baum

* Manuscript frayed.

*William Blount to [Thomas Hart]*²⁹

State of Tennessee Sullivan County
Beaver Creek, Iron Works³⁰ April 14th 1797

Dear Sir,³¹

I beg you the favour to cause the enclosed advertisement to be published Three Months in some one of the Kentuckey News Papers. I will repay you the Cost. I would have sent you the price of publishing by this Conveyance if if [*sic*] I considered it a safe one. — King the Publisher is as industrious a Man as you are, I will not say with as good a Share of Judgment yet he has a good share of that essential article in any business. — I return from this place immediately to the Session of Congress³² which commences on the 15th May — I beg you to present my most affectionate Respects to your Lady & Family and to believe me [with] great esteem & respect

Your ob^d. Servant
W^m. Blount

Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount

Princeton 18th. April 1797

Dear Sir

I have wrote you fully by Capt Baum[.] Col. Little has dis-appointed me in a few Barrels Corn, I only got a Receipt from the Captain for Two Hundred four & 3/5 Barrels but it will overrun, he will be fully loaded with Fish, The only thing I have to add, be sure to have a Vessel round to Bakers Fishery between the last of this Month and the Tenth of next the Captain to come or send up to me that I may attend the receiving the Fish myself. The Vessel or Vessels must carry at least four Hundred Barrels. Baum says his Schooner can take four Hundred Barrels round and are willing to come after the Fish, if you send Baum's Schooner or one of that size after the Fish, I wish you would

²⁹ The land speculator and promoter of the Transylvania Company, Hart was an old friend and business associate of the Blount family whom John Gray Blount had accompanied on his first Transylvania expedition. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 8; II, *passim*; Blount to John Salter, August 8, 1797, in this volume.

³⁰ A few miles south of the Tennessee-Virginia line. Masterson, *William Blount*, 311.

³¹ From the Hart Collection.

³² The special session called to consider foreign affairs, including, although he did not know it, William Blount's "conspiracy." See Masterson, *William Blount*, 311 ff.

send Emery also with his little Boat and load him with Salt and let him come up to me with it, and I will load him back with what I can pick upon Meherren River, say Bacon, Corn & Fish

The Schooner Dolphin is in excellent order & is loading with a Valuable Cargo, will drop down to Edenton in five or Six days, Pray give me the best information of the markets and the risks in the West indies, her Cargo consist[s] of Peas, Corn, Bacon, Fish and Eighteen Inch Shingles, let me hear as quick as possible from you, direct one of your letters here and the other to Edenton for me where I expect to be on the Schooners going down

I am Dr Sir

your mo. ob^{dt}. Serv^t.

B. Coakley

Addressed: John G Blount Esquire
Merch^t.
Washington

Free B Coakley
Mail

Henry Williamson to John Gray Blount

Mattemuskeet

April 24th 1797 —

Mr. John G. Blount

Sir I Rec^d. your Letter by the barrer Mr Dersane[,] Notery &c which Informs me, of the Disagreeable News, [th]at the Powers become Insificent;³³ by the Omision of a word or Two; Which Disopointment I am Very Sorry for, as well on your part as my own — and Ocations me to Lay aside Some design which might be Beneficial to me; — I am now Residing near John Gibbes on a Small farm which I have Rented in hopes of Raising of my Corn if Season permit — but with Hering that it will Exspend with more Provision than I have, I must beg the favour of you to Send me one barrel of pork by Mr Joseph Gibbs, Likewise

³³ See Mary Fitzgerald to [Henry Williamson], June 24, 1796, in this volume.

Two Linnen Hankf. Also ———* I am Sir yours with Respect
Henry Williamson

Mr. John G Blount

NB I Expect to be up about June if Life Lasts &c —
H W —

Mr.

Addressed: John G. Blounte
Merchant
Washington

favrd by
Mr.
J. Gibbs

Hugh Williamson to John Gray Blount

Edenton 30th April 1797

Dear Sir

I told you that I had proposed sending a Barrel of good Hams to New York. I had neglected asking Mr Collins whether he had sent the Hams. Since my Return from Washington Mr Collins informs me that no Hams have been offerd him for Sale, since he received my Letter on that Head, that he thought good. I wish to have a Brl of good Hams for the Use of a friend; if prepared with Salt Petre so much the better.³⁴ I understood of you that good one's could be had on that River. Will you take the Trouble to put up a barrel of the best you can get and send it to New York direct to C: W: A:³⁵ Esqr at New York

care of Mr. Van den Heuvell and pay the freight, inclose me the Accot:

The weather becoming warm I think you had best pack the Hams with ashes.

I am with great Respect

Yr

Hu Williamson

[J G Blo]†unt Esqr

Addressed: John G Blount Esqr:
Washington

* Line scratched out.

³⁴ Saltpeter is often included in the processing of hams to fix the bright red color of the lean meat. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Eleventh Edition, X, 613.

³⁵ Charles Ward Apthorpe, father-in-law of Williamson was a wealthy New York merchant. *Dictionary of American Biography*, XX, 300. Williamson spelled the name Apthorp. Williamson to Blount, July 6, 1797, in this volume.

† Manuscript torn.

John Gray and Thomas Blount to J. W. G. Prescott

Washington Ap^l. 30th 1797

Cap^t. Prescott ³⁶

The Schooner Regulator is now loaded agreeable to the annexed Invoice and as St^t Eustatius³⁷ has been long neglected by all americans Vessells its more than probable a small Cargo like yours will sell there to advantage and if not you can then run to St^t. Thomass or St^t. Bartholomews, we say them as being Neutral there will be no danger, and we do not mean that You Should run any risque by giving a preference to either of the Waring powers after you have once been in port[.] Our object is to Sell for Cash the Small Cargo and return with all posible expedition, When you arrive at St^t. Eustatius please inquire for a Mr. Andrew Panyear who formerly did and suppose now does reside there and apply to him[.] he will [2] give you the best advice what you can do but he is not a merchant

Please also enquire for a M^{rs}. Lespear who used occasionally to reside at the Small Pox House and with whom J.GB lived ³⁸ when he had it, present the old Lady Something as a token of His remembrance

As We before mentioned our object is Cash but as its probable the Produce of the WI. will afford a profit we shall leave you to exercise your best Judgement as to what will make the best Voyage and bring for return accordingly observing the importance of dispatch

Wishing you an agreeable Voyage
Yours &c.

J G & Tho Blount

[3] Invoice of the Cargo on board the American Schooner Regulator owned by John G & Tho Blount of Washington Shipped by them on their own Acc^t. for the Island of St^t. Eustatius to the address of J W G Prescott, Master on board —

2 Hh^{ds} Tob^o. n^o 177-1080 . 148 . 932^w. n^t.
186-1410 . 140 . 1270.

2,202 ^w. @ 60/ — £66 . 1 . 4

³⁶ From the Letter Book.

³⁷ One of the Leeward Islands.

³⁸ B'ount had gone to St. Eustatius in 1777 as a North Carolina agent seeking to buy salt. He apparently had contracted smallpox and had lived in the quarantine house. Clark, *State Records*, X, 984-985; XI, 406.

14 Bbls Pork	@ 180/—	126—
4 Casks Rice W ^t . 1078	40/—	21.11.2
46 Bbls Herrings	50/—	115—
815 bus Indian Corn	8/—	326—
5 ^m 22 In Shingles	20/—	5—
		<hr/>
		£659 .. 12 .. 6

Washington Ap^l. 30th 1797

E. E.

JG & Tho Blount

John Lewis Taylor³⁹ to [John Gray Blount]

[Fayetteville, May 4, 1797]

Sir,

Your letter respecting the suits in Fayetteville Superior Court, came to hand time enough to answer the purpose of it — We regularly go through the docket every Court, so that it is out of the common cause, for a suit on note or bond to remain more than six months in Court; but your notes were sent to Mr. Henrahan and were not returned in time to compel me to plead —, So that a delay of a twelve month from this time is insured — There are four suits in all which I have entered time to plead —

I remain with esteem

Your humble Serv^t.

John Lewis Taylor . .

Fayetteville 4th. May
1797 —

³⁹ Taylor represented Fayetteville in the House of Commons, 1792-1795. An able lawyer, he was elected to the Superior Court of North Carolina in 1798, and served as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court from its establishment in 1818 to his death in 1829. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 129; Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, II, 156; Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 331, n.1.

*Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount*Princeton 9th May 1797

Dear Sir

This day Col William Wynns⁴⁰ has given me notice to receive the fish, that after Tomorrow they [wi]ll* be at my risk. — I hope Sir if you have not despatched a Vessel 'ere this that you will get one that will carry Three Hundred Barrels to come on to Wynns Fishery at the redBanks⁴¹ as quick as possible, as there is three Hundred Barrels lying there. — If you cant get a Vessel to come round for the Fish, write me immediately that I may get one in Edenton to take the Fish round to you — Your attention to this Business will oblige your Friend and

Hb¹ Serv^t

B: Coakley

N B

There is Fish lying at Baker's Fishery and two or three others but [t]hese* are not at the same risk that Wynns is —

B C

Addressed: John G Blount Esquire

Merch^t

Washington

Mail

Free B Coakley

*Benjamin Coakley to John Wallace*Princeton 9th May 1797 —

Dear Sir

I wrote you by Capt Russel & William Coakley sometime past, wherein I mentioned to you Mr. T. Washington had lodged with me Two Hundred & odd Dollars to purchase Corn for you, But that article being very High here I thought it most prudent not to purchase any for you, and inform'd you I would lodge the

⁴⁰ A resident of Hertford County who served in the House of Commons in 1779. The Journals in Clark, *State Records* do not support Wheeler's statement that he also served in 1782. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 211; and Clark, *State Records*, XIII, 784; XIX, i, 382, 394-399.

* Manuscript torn.

⁴¹ The name applied to the bank of the Meherrin River north of Murfreesboro. From geographical information in the private files of William S. Powell, Librarian, North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina Library, Chapel Hill.

Money with Mr. John Blount of Washington, I went on to Washington and did Carry the Money with me, but hearing you had gone on to Plymouth, Edenton and other places in the North Counties from Washington I expected I should have seen you myself before I left that quarter on your way Home, but we missed each other, and I did not deliver Mr. Blount the Money owing to this, that if you & I could have agreed for Corn I would have delivered it at the Castle for you. But not seeing you prevented my sending the Corn, I wrote you once or twice to Edenton but never got any answer respecting the Business. Mr Blount wrote me a few days past that you had purchased Corn in Newbern and wanted the money to pay for it, I will send him the Money in a Day or two, and you may rest assured Sir I will pay you Interest or any Damage you may sustain by the Money's being in my Hands —

I am D^r Sir

Your most obedient

B Coakley

Addressed: Cap^t John Wallace Esquire
Shell Castle

John Gray Blount to Johnathan Price

Washington. May 11th. 1797

Friend Price⁴²

I have this day rec^d a Letter from J[ohn]. Strother requesting me if I know where you are to inform you that he has compleated the Counties of Wake, Cumberland, Richmond, Anson, Montgomery, Rowan, Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, Lincoln, Rutherford Burk, Iredell, the S^o. W^t. part of Wilks part of Buncombe[.] that Letter was dated at Salisbury the 27th April and says he shall proceed will all posible expedition

I am desirous for yours as well as my own Interest to See the Chart of the Sea Coast Compleated as I want about 20 to Send to the different Sea Ports of Europe to give an idea of the importance of Shell Castle[.] please inform me when they will be compleated

I am with much esteem

Yours &c.

J. G. Blount

⁴² From the Letter Book.

*Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount*Princeton 23rd May 1797 —

Dr. Sir

Yours of the 10th Instant I received on Saturday last p Capt Burroughs whom I delivered one Hundred and five Barrels Herrings at Baker's fishery, and sent him down to Wynns fishery at the red Banks to take in one Hundred and Six Barrels, which makes Two Hundred and Eleaven in all and was as many as he said he could Carry —.

The 6th & 8th of May the Fish was filled up and put in Shipping order, and the Vessels not arriving I was obliged to receive them on the 10th and stored them at my own risk

The Fish that Burroughs has got in is very good and Barrels large, I have seen the most of them myself

Its probable they may take a day to fill them up when they get to the Castle, for you know as the Salt dissolves the fish will Sink, Burroughs must have sailed yesterday for the Castle, I have an Hundred and odd Barrels Fish yet to Send Round to Washington and Sharp Blount⁴³ has got ten or fifteen, if you have not started Emery as you expected send a Vessel round as quick as you possibly Can, that will carry about Two Hundred Barrels but not more to take what I have got on Hand round to Washington. If I have not fish enough I will fill her up with something or other Capt Burroughs inform'd me you partly promised him another freight, I wish you would send him as he appears to be an orderly Man, The Vessel you send round to me must come to Princeton first, Then I shall know what to put in and how much she will Carry —

I wish you to attend to this and let me hear from you [as q]uick* as possible whether you mean Sending round or not [2] as I want to Send all I can rake and Scrape here round to you to pay my Debts in Washington. — The Man I sold the greater part of my Goods to is Dead, he made no Will and made me no payments, I expect I shall administer [o]n* his Estate, which will prevent me from being at your Court as our Court is of the Same Week. — The Schooner Dolphin sailed from Edenton for St. Bartholomews last friday, loaded with Corn, Peas, Bacon Hams, Fish and Eighteen Inch Shingles, I have

⁴³ Sharpe (1771-1810) was the son of Jacob Blount, Sr., by his second wife, and hence the half-brother of John Gray, Thomas, and William. He married Pene'ope Little in 1794, and spent his life farming at Blount Hall. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxix-xxx.

* Manuscript torn.

Chartered a Vessel for Jackemell [Jacmel] in Hispaniola to take in the remainder of my Shingles with one Hundred & fifty Barrels Fish & a few Hh^{ds}. Tobacco, write me your opinion of the Voyage

I am D^r Sir
your Hb^l Serv^t.
B. Coakley

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Merchant
Washington

Free B Coakley
Mail

John Gray Blount to William Murdock

Washington May 31st. 1797

Mr. William Murdock
Sir.⁴⁴

Herewith you will receive the Power sent for Mr. [Henry] Williamson to sign, Executed in the manner by you pointed out ⁴⁵

Since my last am informed by my Brother William Blount that he has drawn on you different Bills to amount of £500 Sterlg and at so short a sight that you could not Calculate on receiving the Power now Sent timely to enable you to take up the Bills by the receipt of the Money on this Power and hence I fear the Bills are protested, Should that be the Case please Ship by Mr. John Drews Ship or any other Vessell bound to Ocacock Such Goods as you know will best answer from London to this Market which is Simular to [2] Virginia[.] Should no opportunity offer to Ocacock please send them Norfolk to the care of your Frinds there

The amount is so small and the uncertainty of their coming from the circumstance of my Brother having drawn on you so great, that I have not thought proper to send a particular order especially as you are so well acquainted [with] what will answer
please inform the Friends of M^r Williamson that he still lives and enjoys health

I am with much esteem
Your most obt
John G Blount

⁴⁴ From the Letter Book.

⁴⁵ See William Murdock to Blount, June 27, 1796, in this volume.

Alexander Hamilton⁴⁶ to Peter Schermerhorn

[June 26, 1797]

The Brig Russell — an American Vessel was condemned at the Island of Guadaloupe on the general ground of *being found trading to a British port* — This cause appears on the face of the condemnation in a Court called the Court of Commerce — The Vessel after such condemnation is purchased by an American Citizen and brought into the Port of New York —

Question — Can the original owner recover from the purchaser, the present possessor, the vessel or her value?

Answer — It appears to me the better opinion, on general grounds of political convenience between nations, that sentences of condemnation pronounced by the Court of a Belligerent Power of competent jurisdiction, in consequence of a capture or seizure in time of war, — whatever be the cause and whether appearing on the face of the sentence or not, should be conclusive as to the *direct* effects (to wit) the *change* and *transfer* of the property condemned and sold — but that in all *collateral* questions, as those between Insurers and Insured, the validity of the condemnation may be reexamined. [2] Without this a very mischievous conflict of jurisdictions by the mutual rejudging and reversal of each others decrees must arise between nations. Yet it must be confessed, that the present is as strong a case as can well be conceived for combatting the extent of this principle—that the arguments against it are very weighty, especially as they apply to citizens of our own Country becoming purchasers under the unjust sentence, that the question which is now presented, from a peculiarity of features, is somewhat new, and cannot be said to have been yet fully decided. Hence it cannot be deemed inexpedient to make the experiment of a prosecution for obtaining a judicial determination —

Alexander Hamilton

June 26, 1797

For Mr. Schermerhorne

⁴⁶ At Blount's request, his correspondent Peter Schermerhorn had apparently sought from Hamilton opinion on the capture of the "Russell." Hamilton returned to the private practice of law in New York in 1795. Broadus Mitchell, *Alexander Hamilton: The National Adventure, 1788-1804* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1962) 377-378; William W. Wallace to Blount, February 17, 1797, in this volume.

*John Wallace to John Gray Blount*Shell Castle 29th June 1797

Dear Sir

Some time past you wrote me to make out Cameron's Acct. of Lumber, which I have now done, of what is sold. We have examined our Accts and find no more than 33/4 fish Sold as you will see per Acct. I wish you to settle with him for the same deducting the Wharfage

There seems to be no one who knows how much Plank was landed here. Mr. Cameron will please produce the Receipt for said, if possibly there should have been one given (tho' I believe there was not) and the Ballance, if any, shall be delivered when call^d. for — Please tell Mr Cameron, That I shall by no means be intimidated by his publishing my Name, and I am informed by good Authority he has threatened to do since the Liberty of the Press is a common privilege, nor am I anxious to know, when our Characters appear in Public, which will be esteemed the most truly honest & Dignified [2] I wish you to purchase of Mr. W^m. Ross⁴⁷ 200 Bushels Salt for me (to receive it here) as I shall want nearly that quantity for my own use in the Fishery: And should he want the Beaver, to go to Plymouth with a Load, he can have her, as I expect she will return from Newbern (whither I have sent her to grave and repair) by then wanted and she can fetch a Load down if occasion offers which, if agreeable, will either in part, or in whole, be a Remittance upon the salt — please inform me of the price by your Brother Jacob — I want 200 seasoned Sypress Barrels for Mullets of the size of common Herring Barrels, or say of 29 Gal^s. each, with 10 or 12 Hoops made with a pretty strait Bilge in such manner as to unhead without starting the upper Quarter Hoops. — We shall want them by the middle of Aug^t. some of them at least, and all of them by the last — Let us know by Jacob Blount [3] whom I expect here every day, or by the first Opportunity — so that in case of Disappointment upon this head, we may look out in season, else where —

I am Dear Sir with Sentiments of
Esteem your Most Ob^t. Servant
John Wallace

Addressed: J. G. Blount Esq^r.

Washington

p Mr. W harris

⁴⁷ A merchant of Washington. William Charles Lake to Blount, January 25, 1800, and William Blackledge to Blount, March 5, 1800, in this volume.

*Hugh Williamson to John Gray Blount*Philad^a: 6th July 1797

Dear Sir

Your brother William having occasion for money last Winter drew on W^m Murdock of London for £500 S^{tg} [sterling] which you had authorised him to use. I indorsed his Bills upon the assurance that the Money was on Hand & that he was authorised to draw for it. Your Letter of advice⁴⁸ did not arrive in Time and the Bills are come back protested. Without being prepared with cash I must absolutely take them up in six or eight Days at whatever sacrifice of Property it may be done. The amo^t. with 20 P Cent Damages is about 2666 Dls. After I had indorsed those Bills, your Brother having a very urgent Demand for money, I lent him 2000 Dls & took up a Draft for 1550 Dls that he should have paid. Those last advances have cut so deep on my Cash Acco^t. that I am now in a situation, by no means pleasant. It is really humiliating to be compelled to make application to Jews & Infidels on such Occasions for a supply of Cash. Your Brother, on the Return of the Bills, promised to draw again, or rather that you would draw in his favour or mine & I promised to send over the Bills so that they should not be subject to Damages if again protested; but his present Disasters⁴⁹ I fear will prevent him from writing to you on the Subject. I have therefore to request that you would for immediate Relief send me inclosed a Set of Bills on M^r. Murdock for £500 S^{tg} with Duplicates of Letter of Advice, I shall [2] be at New York, where my attendance for some Time is necessary, occasion'd by the late Death of M^r. Apthorp[e] my father in Law. I know nothing of the means you may have of repayment, in case of money advanced to your Brother, but if he has drawn, without your approbation for this money, I have to request that you would send me the Bills for that money to be passed to any acco^t. you shall prefer; I could so manage the Bills as to relieve myself in a good measure from this most distressing Predicament.

I can imagine from my own feelings what your's must be, occasioned by the late misfortunes of your Brother, I need not

⁴⁸ A letter from the drawer of a bill to the drawee advising that the bill has been drawn and giving any further information about it. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 74.

⁴⁹ William Blount's "conspiracy" to seize Spanish Louisiana and Florida had just been exposed, and preparations were being made for his impeachment. Masterson, *William Blount*, 300-308, 315-323.

say that I condole with you. Not to think at all about it seems to be the only Remedy.

I am D^r Sir with much Respect
Your obed Serv^t.
Hu Williamson

John G: Blount Esq^r.
Addressed: John G Blount Esq^r
Washington
N: C:

John Gray Blount to John Sommerville

Washington July 11th 1797

Mr. John Sommerville⁵⁰

Sir⁵¹

I returned yesterday from Shell Castle where I had been to leave M^{rs}. Blount and children to avoid if possible the fevers so frequent at this place, on my arrival I found yours of the 22^d. & Tho Blounts of 23rd. Ult^o. from which I find Swanseys Bill⁵² not paid and that you have determined to Sue Swansey which I approve

You refer me to Tom on the subject of the Tuley and he informs me the Terms and Says he shall not insure until the receipt of my next Letter, and that M^r. S. Jackson has offered to become his endorser for the amount of the premium from all which it [is] probable to me that nothing is yet done respecting of it

I Wrote to Tom Several Letters respecting [2] of the Tuley giving him from time to time an account of her Situation & my orders and he in his Letters made such difficulties about procuring insurance that I dispaired of his making the attempt and I did not urge that he Should; however as I find he has talked on

⁵⁰ Sommerville was a mercantile agent of the Blounts. William Blount and Stockley Donelson opened their store in Raleigh under his name in 1795. In 1797 he acted as a Blount agent in Philadelphia for shipping and general mercantile operations, then in October went to Tennessee. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 593, 596-597; Blount to Sommerville, September 15, 1797, in this volume; Letter Book, *passim*; William to John Gray Blount, November 7, 1797; and Thomas to John Gray Blount, December 14, 1797, in this volume.

⁵¹ From the Letter Book.

⁵² Swansey, a Superintendent for the North American Land Company, was engaged in improving company lands in Hyde County. Blount advanced him money and drew on James Marshall, Secretary of the company, for payment. Robert Morris, President of the company, accepted the bills but could not pay. Blount to James Marshall, April 7, 1797, in Letter Book; Blount to Sommerville, September 15, 1797; and Thomas to John Gray Blount, December 14, 1797, in this volume.

the subject I think probable he may have either insured her or left directions with you and therefor I give the following information

That the Tuley Sailed over Occacock all well and in good order on the 5th day of July having waited 25 days for a favorable opportunity to do so cleared out for and written orders to proceed to St. Bartholomews if the Winds would permit & if they would not permit to go to Cape Francois, If he arrived at St. Bartholomews and his Cargo would command 5000 Dollars he was to sell there and return home, but if his Cargo would not command 5000 Dollars he was to clear out for [3] and proceed to Cape Francois unless he had certain information that his Lumber would Sell at Water Million [Melon] Quay at 40 Dolls Per ^m in which case he was to go there & Sell but not to go to Tortola

If he went to Cape Francois he was to value on a House there and bring his returns in Sugar, Coffee, & Molasses, If he was boarded by an English Vessell of War bound out and forbid to go to the Cape he was to urge his Necessity to go there offer to throw over board his Herrings the only provisions he had on board for Sale but if all would not do he was to insist for a convoy to Kingston Jaimaica & there await my orders as I did not know if She was insured there or back

Now as this is the case and insurance is not made and can be made, It had best be so much if to St. Bartholomews & back. [4] So much if to Water Million Quay, so much if to the Cape Via St. Bartholomews & so much if direct to the Cape and lastly so much if to Jaimaica with & so much without convay and then so much home from there, There is no doubt a diffirence in the risques and you will do the best you can if She is not already insured for She is too much to loose, the Vessell Should be insured at 9000 Dollars the Cargo at 2000 the Grain intended to be shipped being left out, and by the inclosed calculation that must amount to 5000 Dollars at St. Bartholomews, in which case she will proceed no further but return with Salt, Rum & Sugar, Should any late arrival from St. Bartholomews have taken place at Phil^a. you can learn the prices & judge of the probability of her selling there, I have no idea of her Selling at Water Million Quay because if 40 Dolls Per ^m. [5] for Lumber can be had at that place there is no doubt the 5000 Dolls will be had at St. Bartholomews

I have no news yet of the Regulator[.] Col^o. King came in for Mrs. W^m. Blount & at Raleigh on her way to Knoxville the Horses run away with the Carriage broke that to pieces & broke her arm, the last news she was doing well —

I am with much esteem
Your Most Obt
Jn^o. G Blount

101 ^M of Sawed Lumber, R, O, Hh ^d . Staves		
& Hoops	@ 30 \$.....	\$3030
150 Bbl ^s Herrings	8 \$.....	1200
150 ^M 22 Inch Shingles ..	6 \$.....	900
		<hr/> \$5130 <hr/>

John Gray and Thomas Blount to Peter Schermerhorn

Washington July 17th 1797

M. Peter Schermerhorn
Sir⁵³

We have contracted to deliver the bearer of this Letter Mr. Chas Smallwood Goods in New York at the whole Sale price to the amount of three hundred & thirty Six Dollars — Having no correspondent in New York in the dry Good Line We take the Liberty to request you will in our name procure Goods to the amount aforesaid for which we will punctually remit

We are with much esteem
Y^{rs}
J G & Tho Blount

336 \$——

John Gray Blount to John Carson

Washington July 20th 1797

Col^o. John Carson
D Sir⁵⁴

How far your bargain with Mr. Ragsdale⁵⁵ may be advantageous or proper to be insisted on is not for me to determine on,

⁵³ From the Letter Book.

⁵⁴ From the Letter Book.

⁵⁵ See Mary Ragsdale to Blount, January 24, 1797, in this volume.

but I am of Opinion that was you to State the facts to the Next Assembly — viz — that you had sold yr entries &c. to him and that he was to pay the purchase money to the State and thereby deprived yourself of the means of doing it — and that his deranged Situation had deprived him from doing any thing and therefore pray that the State would relieve you — I have no doubts as the facts are so notorious and the Case so hard on one but that the assembly would Suffer you to relinquish the Land or give twelve months to raise the Cash in & Compleat the Surveys &c which ever might be thought best — If you determine to do anything write me perhaps I can assist you & your attention to my business merits my attention.

I am with much esteem
JGB

John Gray Blount to Willie Blount

Washington July 21st. 1797

Dear Willie⁵⁶

Since my Letter of yesterday I have agreed with Col^o. Love to convey him Lands at valuation to amount of Nine Thousand Dollars as you will see by the Copy of agreement enclosed, and I on my part appoint Gen^l. James Roberson and he on his part [2] Appoints _____* and the Lands which I valued are the Tract purchased of Bradley on Mill Creek and the deficiency to be made up out of Lands of Jones Creek of Harpeth [River] of such as may not be sold by you or William Blount

My reason for fixing these Lands are that I suppose them in a Safe place to Settle on & therefore will be valued nearer to their value than others at a greater distance

If Gen^l. Roberson cannot act you will on my part appoint some other man and as soon as the Lands are fixed on and valued inform me that I may send you a Special Power to convey them

I am as usual
Yours &c
Jn^o. G. Blount

Mr. Willie Blount
Knoxville

⁵⁶ From the Letter Book.

* A space where the name was to have been inserted later.

*John Willis to John Gray Blount*Lumberton [Robeson County] 22nd July 1797

Dear Sir,

I this moment rec^d. a letter from M^r. Blackledge, requesting me to try to prevent the Sheriff from Selling your lands in this County for the Taxes, I went Immediately to him and requested him to do so, this he has positively refused & says that he will sell on the first day of Aug^t. agreeable to his advertisem^t. or that he will subject himself to Great Censure as great quantities are to be sold on that day, & many people will attend. There will be no way of fending him off, If I had the Money I would advance it Chearfully for you but I have it not. You should send express Immediately

Jn^o G Blount Esq

I am Sincerely Yours
J Willis

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq
Beaufort County
Mail Washington

*John Gray Blount to Ephraim Elsbray*⁵⁷

Washington July 25th 1797

Dear Sir⁵⁸

I have not been able from any person I can find to ascertain the exact sum & Pole that the Taxes of your county amounts to, and being obliged to the Bar to bring up M^{rs}. Blount who is there its posible I might not be back in time to see you before the sale of the 5th Aug^t. have therefore sent by Cap^t. Alderson Thirty Pounds which please receive on account of my Taxes and on sight I will give you an exact List of all I am to pay for and pay the balance if any

Whilst I am on this subject permit me to make an observation to which I am prompted by feeling only, as be assured I have no posible interest either directly or indirectly in the Lands in question I mean the 200^m advertised as John Halls; Them Lands

⁵⁷ The sheriff of Hyde County.⁵⁸ From the Letter Book.

has been sold by [2] Mr. Hall to the North American Land Company which is composed of Rob^t. Morris and some others⁵⁹ as respectable Characters any any [sic] in the United States and men who have done as much for their country as any other men in it for it is a fact which ought to be well remembered that when the United States were at a low ebb, The credit of Rob^t. Morris was a great Support to them, On this consideration they are entitled to every indulgence which every Citizen of the United States can give them now at a time when they have been unfortunate from the long and hot War in Europe which has deranged their plans of raising Cash and I am sure you and every good man must feel for the unfortunate, In the next place it is of importance to the County of Hyde that them Lands should remain in the hands of a company who [3] have already spent considerable of money & Shewn a disposition to improve them in a manner that Individuals neither can or will do and which when done will add much to the interest and improvement of the County, Now as you are and will be always safe as the Land is at all times liable for the Taxes you can with Safety to yourself and much advantage to the Owners of the Land putt off the Sale of it to the latest period at which you must have the money & advertise the same over again, If you will be so kind as to do this and inform me I will write on to Several of that Company, which I had not before done as Mr. Swansey was their agent here; and I have no doubt but that such conduct will be rewarded by them; for they really are clever men most of them.

[4] With a confidence that you will feel & act so as to serve the unfortunate

I am

your most obt

John G. Blount

Ephraim Elsbray Esq^r.

Wood Stock —

⁵⁹ John Nicholson of Philadelphia, former Comptroller General of Pennsylvania, and James Greenleaf of New York, former American consul at Amsterdam. "The Land Speculations of a Great Patriot," in *Business History Review* (Kraus Reprint Corporation: New York, 1962), III, Number 3, 1-9.

*John Gray and Thomas Blount to Timothy Pickering*⁶⁰

Washington N. C. July 25th. 97

Timothy Pickering Esq^r.

Sir⁶¹

Herewith you will receive the Original Protest and condemnation of our Brigantine the Russell for which we wish to exhibit a claim against the Republic of France and are advised that the Original Papers must be deposited in your Office.

With much respect

We are

Your Most Obed.

Jn^o. G & Tho Blount

Benjamin Blackledge to Robert Morris

Washington July 27th 1797

Robert Morris Esq^r.

Sir⁶²

Yours of the 13th Instant to John Gray Blount Esq^r. is duly to hand & in his absence opened by me — and the Letter to Mr. Bell forwarded.

One of the Bills you mention is in the Hands of Mr. John Sommerville[,] who presented it for Acceptance[,] Lodged there for the purpose of making a payment for Doct^r. Bowen of this place to Doct^r. David Jackson of Phil^a. but have not heard any thing of the other which was the first drawn only that it was protested for non payment

From your taking no notice of any arrangements made for the payment of the Taxes of the Companies Lands in Hyde [2] County — I conclude Mr. Swansey has neglected to inform them that the Lands are advertised for sale on the 5th of next month to pay the Taxes due thereon for the year 1796 which I am informed amounts to 4 or 500 Dollars.

Mr. Blount the other day was speaking on that subject to a Mr. John Alderson of that county when he observed that he daily expected the [North American Land] Company would

⁶⁰ Secretary of State, 1795-1800. Bemis, *Diplomatic History*, 104, 123.

⁶¹ From the Letter Book.

⁶² From the Letter Book.

forward the money as Mr. Swansey must have informed them, that it was necessary and observed that he would write the Sheriff as it might not arrive in time — and in his Letter Book I find he has done so — inclosed you have a Copy which will more fully explain to you the Business —

You have also inclosed an advertisement [3] which I never observed until this day

I am with much respect
Your Most Obt
Ben Blackledge

Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount

Princeton 30th July 1797

Dear Sir

As yet I have no acc^{ts} of Webb in the Schooner Dolphin, there is two Vessels arrive[d] at Edenton from the West Indies, one from Jamaica and the other from St. Bartholomews, fish was worth only Six Dollars in Jamaica, twenty two Inch Shingles nine Dollars, Eighteen inch Shingles worth Six Dollar[s]* in St. Bartholomews, fish and lumber is as high to windward [in the Windward chain] as they are at Jamaica, I wish if there should be any arrivals with you from the Windward Islands in the West Indies you would enquire after Capt Webb in the Schooner Dolphin and any from the South Side of Hispaniola you will enquire for Capt Jams [James?] in the Schooner Pene-lope and if you collect any information of either of them, please inform me by the first opportunity. I am attacked with the [rheu]matism* in —————* feet and Hips which prevents me [gett]ing† about [2] I got wet coming Home last thursday which has occasioned this attack of the Rheumatism——

It will be out of my power to go to Newbern which I am extremely Sorry for as I wished to have been there at Mr Black-ledge's Settlement with Simpson. You will oblige me by request-ing Mr Young⁶³ to try and have the little Sloop turned into a Schooner⁶⁴ and compleated in three weeks from this as I have

* Manuscript frayed.

† Illegible.

⁶³ John Young was a shipbuilder employed by the Blounts. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 211.

⁶⁴ A sloop has a single mast; a schooner has two.

directed, I believe I shall go from Washington in her to New York if I can get a freight at Washington for her——

Please inform Mr Bodie in the rigger that the Same three Shrouds⁶⁵ that came off of the Sloop will do for the Shrouds for the Schooner say two pair Shrouds to the foremast, and one pair to the Mainmast, the pair that was Swifters⁶⁶ when She was a Sloop will be Sufficient to the Mainmast——

I am D^r Sir

yours &c
B. Coakley

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r.
Merchant
Washington

Free
Mail

John Willis to John Gray Blount

Lumberton 5 Aug^t. 1797

Dear Sir/

The Sale⁶⁷ of the Lands Entered in this county, by Your self & David Allison Commenced on the 2nd this Inst—When I found it quite impossible to prevent it[.] a number of people attended, & the Land was offered one 10th of each Survey—the Sheriff was so particular as to have the Registers Books—However, after much altercation I prevailed with such as I knew had money & would purchase, to give it up, if the money was paid by the 1st of Sep^r—with allowing them to reserve some small pieces—this they have promised & it is all in the hands of four men, who bought about 45 thousand acres & they will relinquish on pay [2] ment &c if it is put of[f] Longer they will not do it, so that

⁶⁵ Ropes leading from a ship's mastheads to give lateral support to the masts.

⁶⁶ Shrouds of a lower mast, usually attached to the gunwales.

⁶⁷ For unpaid taxes.

I hope You will attend to Your interest, so far as not to loose this opp^y—the Loss would be Greater than you might immagine

I am Your Hum¹ Serv^t
J Willis

Jnⁿ G Blount Esq

P S. I bid of 8000 Acres my self Included in the above, which
i[s]* Safe for you

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq
Washington
Tar River

John Gray Blount to John Salter

Washington Aug^t. 8th 97

Dear Sir⁶⁸

I rec^d. Mr. Washington Salters Letter on the subject of the Lands purchased by his Father⁶⁹ of Col^o. Thomas Hart saying that a Title could now be obtained with less difficulty than hereafter which no doubt is true if the sum necessary to pay all the Expenses which have accrued on the Land could be raised which is doubtfull if the amount was Known but it seems that is not ascertained or have I ever understood that the Lands have been divided so that [2] Col^o. Hart can convey to the Executors of Col^o. Salter the Lands he sold him; If all that is done there will not be much trouble or difficulty in procuring from Col^o Hart the Deed agreeable to his Contract now in the hands of William Blount

Will you be pleased to Know if the Lands are divided into 32^{nds}. both as to quality & value or either or in what manner the division has been made, and what is the am^t Col^o. Hart claims from Col^o. Salters Estate and what for[,] that the Ex[ecut]^{ors}. may be prepared to judge if proper to be paid by them

* Manuscript torn.

⁶⁸ From the Letter Book.

⁶⁹ Robert Salter, who died in 1779, and who had made purchases of land for Henderson's Transylvania Land Company. The litigation by heirs such as John and Washington Salter was prolonged by confusion over the company's affairs and by questionable land titles. The Blounts were involved both through John Gray's Transylvania land, purchased when he was a young man, and through Jacob Blount's second wife, Hannah Salter, a daughter of Edward Salter. Clark, *State Records*, XIV, 107-109; Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 29; II, 521; J. W. Wellborn to Blount, September 2, 1796, in this volume.

If the business is in such train that it can be compleated no time shall be lost in getting the Deed

I am with much esteem

Your Most Obt

John G. Blount

Mr. John Salter

John Gray Blount to Hugh Williamson

Washington Aug 17. 1797

Dear Sir⁷⁰—

I have two of your Letters unanswered one on the Subject of the 170 Dlls—which I have no excuse for not answering sooner—only that I still intended to do it next post—& so it went undone [2] The other demanded and would have had more attention but I was at Shell Castle with my Family in Search of health; when it arrived & for some time after—When I got home the disagreeable business of W^m. B.⁷¹ really for a time put all other thoughts out of my head—and consequent business has taken up much of my time since—You will now receive your mem^o. respecting the 170 Dlls & an explanation why I ought not to draw on London—which cannot be better done than by sending you a Copy of Mr. Murdocks Letter to me and of my Letter to him of the 31st May last both of which are herewith, from them you will see the prospect is Small & that arrangements were probably made for such sum as shall be rec^d. before my drafts could get to hand

I am much pleased to see Doct Romaynes publication, for many reasons & one is that he says of Old Tim⁷² what I have long thought

With much respect

Yrs

J G Blount

H Williamson Esq

⁷⁰ From the Letter Book.

⁷¹ William Blount had been expelled from the United States Senate, and was facing impeachment proceedings brought against him by the House. Masterson, *William Blount*, 303 ff.

⁷² Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, a bitter Blount enemy. Masterson, *William Blount*, *passim*. Romaine was a Blount confederate in the conspiracy. Masterson, *William Blount*, 306-308, 309-310, 312, 315.

*John Gray Blount to Robert Morris*Washington Aug^t. 25th 1797Robert Morris Esq^r.D Sir⁷³

In my absence your Letter of the 13th Ult^o came to hand and as it was of importance that you should have an immediate answer Mr. [Benjamin] Blackledge My Clerk wrote you of the 27th to which no answer is received.

I am happy now to embrace the opportunity of informing you that the Land of the North American Land Company in the county of Hyde is not sold for the Taxes, The manner in which it has been prevented cannot be so well explained in any other Manner as by incloseing a copy of the Letter which conveys me [2] the information on which I shall make no comment except that such Acts of Kindness are rarely to be met with and that the circumstances of Cap Aldorson are really such as he has pointed out

Had a Sale taken place the sum to be raised would have been just double that paid which would have sold a large quantity of Land, perhaps one fourth the whole quantity, which may appear strange but such is the scarcity of money in this part of the State

I am with much respect

Your Most Obt

Jn^o. G. Blount*John Willis to [Richard Blackledge]*Raft Swamp Mills⁷⁴ 1st Sep^r. 1797

Dear Sir Your express arivd here last night and with him, Mr. Hails, the sheriff, who I had an appt to Consult on the Subject of the Sales &^c—the Am^t of the Taxes due is two hundred & one pounds 5/1 & this I am pretty Confident is all that is wanted by any of the parties, You may [be] Certain that I want no part without paying Mr. Blount for it nor do I thing any of them would exact any of it without compensation, but the fact is that

⁷³ From the Letter Book. For other letters on this subject see Blount to Ephraim Elsbay, July 25, 1797; and Benjamin Blackledge to Robert Morris, July 27, 1797, in this volume.

⁷⁴ Raft Swamp River is northwest of Lumberton in north central Robeson County. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, map opposite 454.

the Sheriff who purchased largely is not a Monied man and any of the parties that were at much Trouble to raise the money I suppose would not relinquish the advantage, & they have agreed now, at least all I can se of them, to Give you till the 20th day of this month, at which time the Sheriff Will go to the Treasurer, & after that, it will be useless to apply—it is not in my power to procure longer time, as the [s]heriff mus[t] then Settle his public Acc^t but I have discovered since the sale that Allison's Lands are sold [2] long ago & have undergone Several Conveyances, and are now owned by Mr. Mecker in Philadelphia who has written me on the subject, & of these I do Suppose Mr. B. need care nothing about, how much of Mr. Blount's lands were sold I do not know but I think at least half were all——* do Avail Your self of this advantage, and if nothing better can be done let Mr. Blount open an office and sell these Lands in this County, a Great deal of money may be raised on the Robison Lands a Great part of them are very Valuable, if any thing should be attempted in that way I would give all the assistance in my Power[.] much might be sold at a Moderate price for Cash, & much more on Credit, & let the rest go to the Devil. I feel Vexed that there Should be any disappointment or that Mr Blount or Your self should be Subject to any Embarassment about it, I am dear Sir

Your Hum^l Serv^t.

J Willis

J. W. Wellborn to John Gray Blount

oxford [Granville County] Sept^{er} the 2 1797

Sir

as I suppose you will not be at the next Genl Assembly I beg leave to put you in mind of promises maid last Assemble respecting the money due me from the Estate of Robert Salter.⁷⁵ Since which time Ive receiv^d. no money & it appears to me the only alternative that I have left Except to Emerse⁷⁶ Mr. Stokes other wise Bring Suit against you on your assumpsition⁷⁷ which would be Disagreeable Circumstance[.] at all Events I must get my

* Manuscript torn.

⁷⁵ See Blount to John Salter, August 8, 1797, in this volume.

⁷⁶ Amerse, that is, to impose a fine or punish. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 107.

⁷⁷ Assumpsit. An agreement or promise. Note 7, above.

money to fullfill my promises to the Norther^d therefore I hope you will do your Endeavour, to send [the]* balance of the money to Salisbury Superior Court together with all the Receipts given by Maj^r. Stokes & the trustees Brown & Nesbit as we Can then be able to ascertain the amount due me from Mr Salter. I hope you Enjoy health & prosperity &C I am yours with respect & Esteem

Col^o. J G Blount

J. Wellborn

Addressed: Col^o. J. G. Blount
Washintown
N. C. Bufort County

favouvd by M^r
Salter

John Gray Blount to John Stockdell

Washington Sept. 5th 1797

Mr. John Stockdell
Dr Sir⁷⁸

Your Letter of the 31st Ult^o from Halifax I received and thank you for the civilities you are pleased to offer & which I with pleasure accept for my confidence [over-speculation] has made it necessary I should sell some property and there is none I can spare better than lands of which I have considerable both in the State of Tennessee & the different parts of this State any of which I will sell for Goods and if you will inform me by Letter when you intend for New York I will previous to your seting out describe the different Lands I wish Sold[.] In the mean time should any thing turn up I have 750^M Acres in the County of Buncombe which is gene [2] rally rich but mountaneous & well watered perhaps the best Vine & Grass Land in America and many plains & Hollows which produce Grain equal to any Lands in America, There is Within my Bounds many small settlements where people were poor & only took up 50 or 100 acres[;] I also have several large swamps in the lower part of the state which were they cleared & drained which is no case difficult I would engage the Lands to produce 50 bus Rice to the acre for

* Manuscript obscured.
⁷⁸ From the Letter Book.

the first few years & then 30 to 50 bus Indian Corn or 20 to 40 bus. Wheat—These Lands should be an object to some of the Virginians who hold large parcels of Negroes & I would sell them low and take Negroes in payment, I will oblige myself to take back in seven years any Swamp I sell with which the [3] purchaser is dissatisfied and repay the principle with Interest but I firmly believe every Acre will if cultivated command 8 Dolls per acre & will in that time have repaid all expence of clearing and Cultivating,—

These Lands are not subject to over flow or will they ever ware out, most of them are heavy to clear & all to Ditch but the fall is certain so that they must drain if ditched, In Short, their real value is more than that of the Kentucky Land but they must be tended with Negroes, I can accomodate with tracts of any size—

You see your kind offer bids fare to give you considerable of trouble but it shall not be without fruits if attended with success and you may at all events engage Military Lands at Cumberland or Red River⁷⁹ at one Dollar per acre in good Goods[;] I will find the Land

Yours &c. Jn^o. G Blount

John Gray Blount to Robert Morris

Washington Sep 8th 1797

Robert Morris Esq^r.

D^r. Sir⁸⁰

I have no doubt but that when M^r. Allison delivered you my Deed for 100^M acres of Land in Tyrrel County he informed you there was more Land within the Grant —————* out which was conveyed

The facts are as follows, The Surveyor of the county had been negligent and made his return without ever actually measuring in such manner as to asertain the real contents which I did not discover until after I obtained the Grant[.] I then had the Land Surveyed and conveyed the 100^M acres & reserved the balance to myself

⁷⁹ A tributary of the Cumberland, downstream from Nashville.

⁸⁰ From the Letter Book.

* Ink smeared.

The Sheriff of Tyrrell has lately advertised the whole 100^M acres thereby meaning the whole Grant for sale to pay the Taxes due Thereon for the year 1796 which [2] I have paid amount as stated below, but in order to prevent yours and my Lands being again blended together, I got him to set up & sell that part which I had reserved so that your 100^M acres yet remains entire on which you have paid only the single Tax when the Law allows the Sheriff to collect a double Tax when put to Sale

I have now to request that you will please write the Sheriff of Tyrell that my receipt shall be good for all sums for which a part of your Lands in that County may have sold for[,] more than the Taxes due thereon[,] which will enable me to get a Deed from him for my own Land, not one foot of which I pledge you my honour is within the bounds of your Deed and hereafter I shall have to pay Taxes for 10^M & you 90^M whilst in fact you hold your full 100^M

I shall be much obliged by your [3] attending to this as soon as convenient as I want the Sheriff's Deed, I will also thank you to remit me the amount paid as Taxes which you will see Stated below for really Cash is now raised here with greater difficulty than I ever before saw, no price will procure on loan, There are several Instances of the whole of Lands being sold 1/10 at a time until the whole has been sold to raise the double Tax and on the ground the purchaser has sold at a Credit the Same Land at one Dollar per acre

As I have considerable of the Swamp & piney Lands of this State on hand procured and held at a great expense will you permit me to ask if the prospect of selling them is like to be better and what it now is?

That 100^M acres held by you in Tyrrell is I am led to believe valuable [4] a part thereof being covered with Juniper & Cypress Timbers & other parts Rich Land if drained, and all who I have seen that have been at the ditch cut by Swansey⁸¹ admit that the Lands is rich and they are now convinced may be laid dry enough to produce any sort of Grain, This Summer has been favourable to that sort of Land vis low Land and the People of that neighbourhood who tend lower ground but nearer the water & ditched[,] but no richer if so much so[,] will gather 20 bushells of Indian Corn to the 1000 Hills of which there are 1600 to 1800 to the acre at least[,] and off the same ground there comes a

⁸¹ See Blount to John Sommerville, July 11, 1797, in this volume.

Crop of Peas Beans, or Pumpkins, Hence its plain that labour only is wanting to make them Lands very valuable

I am

Yours &c.

John G Blount

[5] State of the Taxes of 100^M ac[r]es of Land in Tyrrell as receipted for by the Sheriff

100,000 Acres @ 22^dp C^t is £91-13.4

Expense advertising &c 2 . . 0.0

£93.13:4

Which at 10/—to the Dollar is 187 1/3 Dollars——

Henry Williamson to [John Gray Blount]

Mattk^t [Mattamuskeet] Septem the 12 1797

Sir I received your favour tenth of Last-Instant and forty six pound of bacon By Rob^t. Gibbs^y

By miss Fitzgerald of london⁸² last Letter dated 27 feb^y 97 we find at that time the british funds were reduced to a vary Low Ebb[.] as I am Confident the raising and fall of stocks depends upon various events of war there has bin now about eight monts Exsepired from the dat of mistres fitzgerd Letter was rote that purhaps by the time that Letters wrote now should reach England things might ware a better Aspect but Sir As I am Confident your well acquainted with every Sircumstance of the war and can easly guess wather you think it will admit to Send fresh powers for the £1500 S^o sea Annuities And the 337.10 cash bank stock as I Put my dependance in you sir Should be vary glad to know your thoughts on the Same[.] by this time I hope you have had the pleasure of hearing from M^r Murdock I hope you and family are in good health and am but poarly my self in the mean time beg leav to subscrib my self with grate respect Sir Your most umble servant

Hen Williamson

Addressed: M^r

John G Blount Esq^r
Washington

⁸² See Mary Fitzgerald to [Henry Williamson], June 24, 1796, in this volume.

*John Gray Blount to John Sommerville*Washington Sept^r. 15th 97

Mr. John Sommerville

Dr. Sir⁸³

I rec^d. your Letter conveying the disagreeable information communicated to you by Mr. Butler⁸⁴—but Surely the 8th Article of the Amendments to the Constitution is too full to admit of any Law to violate it, at all events it will be tryed for W. B is gone to Tennessee & will arrive there about this time⁸⁵

[2] Let [the]* fate of the Tuley be what it may I am [s]atisfied* even to loose her rather than submit to such humiliating terms⁸⁶

By this and the last post I have Written Allison[;] please ask him if rec^d. & press him for an answer—I hope before this Mr. Morris has paid Swanseys Bills[;] Such Services have been done him by me which he knows that he surely will exert himself to pay them⁸⁷—

please Write me often if nothing to say

and oblige

Your Most obt

John G Blount

*John Gray Blount to David Allison*Washington Sept^r 1[5 1797]*

Mr. David Allison

Dr. Sir⁸⁸

I wrote you last post to which I beg you to refer as I am desirous of settling the two account I there mention[.] I am also desirous of knowing what Lands you have sold which are in my name particularly the 39^M in Beaufort & 50^M acres in Tyrrell

⁸³ From the Letter Book.

⁸⁴ Pierce Butler, a bondsman for William Blount. For identification see Thomas to John Gray Blount, February 16, 1798, n.26. in this volume.

⁸⁵ William Blount had forfeited his bond by fleeing from Philadelphia to Tennessee. Butler, a bondsman, probably asked for relief, and John Gray Blount suggests the bond was unconstitutionally high. Masterson, *William Blount*, 322-323.

* Manuscript torn.

⁸⁶ Probably a reference to the high insurance premium required on the "Tuley," which had been captured and the fate of which was in doubt. See Thomas Blount to John Haywood, October 18, 1797, in this volume; Blount letters to Sommerville, Letter Book, *passim*.

⁸⁷ See Blount to Sommerville, July 11, 1797, n.52, in this volume. For the "Services" see Blount to Ephraim Elsbay, July 25, 1797; and Benjamin Blackledge to Robert Morris, July 27, 1797, in this volume.

⁸⁸ From the Letter Book.

and the Lands in my name in Bladen & Roberson [Robeson] as I am makeing Sacrifices to save them Lands from Sale for the Taxes, When R[ichard]. B[lackledge]. your agent cannot raise a Shilling[.] With a hope you have not sold them and if not I may by selling out small parcells raise money to pay the Judgments which will be immediately recovered against me for the purchase of Porterfield & Rhodes—pray write to me fully on this—[2]

—————* subject as I want to make up the —————*
[p]rocure* your paper to tender Mr. Ogg his proportion for you must know it is painfull in all my misfortunes to have these unsettled acc^{ts}. hanging over me

I am with hearty well wishes

Yours &c

John G Blount

Thomas Blount to John Haywood

Tarb^o. 18th Octo. 1797

Dear Sir,⁸⁹

New distresses & an increase of my bodily indisposition overtake & press upon me daily—and really I am now so exhausted & oppressed with care, that I appear even to myself to be fast sinking under them—The Brig Tuley worth with her Cargo 12000 Dollars & the Schooner Regulator, worth with her Cargo, which was more valuable than her hull, 6000 Dollars, were when I last wrote you on voyages to the West Indies, & we expected on their return to receive by them between 10 & 11th Dollars in Cash or property that would a[t] Phil^{ia} or New York immediately command it. But, Sir, the former has been taken & condemned & the latter has ret^d. without a Dollar in Cash or the value of a Dollar in Goods after being Months out, having been obliged to sell her Cargo, which consisted of provisions, to the administration of St Domingo⁹⁰ & Return with a bare promise of payment at a future day if the Government should acquire ability to pay—Insurance was ordered upon the Tuley at Phil^a., although the premium [2] asked was upwards of 30 P Cent, but

* Manuscript torn.

⁸⁹ From the Haywood Collection.

⁹⁰ This French territory in western Hispaniola was undergoing the British war with the Negro General Toussaint L'Ouverture, in addition to its yellow fever epidemic. Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 562-567.

owing to the neglect, I might say rascality of two persons of that City on whom we relied, it was not effected & we have to bear the whole loss which has so prostrated J. G & T. B., for a while at least, that they cannot, by any exertions they are capable of making, meet in due time the pecuniary demands upon them[;] for though very large Sums of Money are due to them, they cannot immediately collect enough to do them service, & the article has everywhere, within the circle of my acquaintance, become so scarce that it cannot be had on loan [or]* any sort of premium, or for property, of any kind, at the lowest price—I have about 5000 Dollars of Stock upon the Books of the Commissioner of Loans for the district of N^o Caro.^a ⁹¹ which, finding that I must do everything myself upon my own individual funds & being determined to sacrifice both property & life to accomplish the work rather than leave it undone, I requested my brother Jacob to sell or mortgage for what it would command; & the day before yesterday he wrote me that there was not a [man in Edenton]* [3] Who, tempted by the utmost prospect of gain, could raise Cash (in hand or paper) to amount of 1000 Dollars—I have offered for sale at very low prices Lands, wherever I have them, Negroes, Horses, & in short every species of property that I possess, & have not raised 100 Doll^{rs} nor dare I cherish a hope that I [will]* until I get to Phil.^a where Sto _____* sell at some price, more than _____* of which about 800 are to come on _____* next, out of Geddy's⁹² negroes that he _____* Willie Jones—Sir, if you could enter [into]* my feelings, you would in one moment be convinced that I am the most wretched being alive, & amidst all the sufferings you can ever experience my wretchedness, proceeding from considerations respecting you alone,⁹³ would always screen me from your censure & make you view me as a blameless victim of the most cruel fate—I shall not cease my exertions but I have honestly developed to you my prospects. I shall if I should be able to travel, go to Halifax on the 27th &

* Illegible.

⁹¹ A loan office had been set up in 1777 to sell Continental bonds and other financial obligations. Subsequent legislation made receipts from this office receivable for taxes on land purchases. Clark, *State Records*, XXIV, 130; XXVIII, 484.

⁹² Probably John Geddy of Halifax. *Heads of Families . . . 1790, North Carolina* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office [for the Bureau of the Census], 1908), 64.

⁹³ Thomas, like the other Blounts, owed money to the State treasurer for personal loans and could not now meet the promised deadline. David Allison to Blount, February 13, 1796, n.43, in this volume.

remain there until the 1 Nov^r. Shall I have the pleasure & the mortification of seeing you there?

adieu—Y^r. friend
Tho. Blount.

Addressed:

John Haywood, Esq^r.
Raleigh
Louisburg
Mail

Thomas Blount to John Haywood

Halifax 5th. Nov. 1797

Dear Sir,⁹⁴

Your Letter pr your brother Stephen was rec^d. at Tarborough & was the most acceptable & pleasing thing that could have been presented to me, but it was not in my power to answer it, or say any thing to you on the subject of it, until I came here—at this place I have made arrangements that will, I hope, be agreeable to you—My brother Jacob will by the meeting of the assembly or sooner if possible, send you Certificates of Stock standing in my name on the Books of W^m Skinner⁹⁵ to amount of 4444 Dol^s. 95 Cents, vizt 1975.54 6 PC^t [?] 1481.65 3 PC^t. & 987.76 Def^d. which at 16/8—10/—& 12/6 (the lowest prices) is worth 3004 Dol^s. in Cash—& with the Certificates he will also send you a power to him to Transfer to such person as you shall name—upon this fund[?] [2] I hope you will be able to obtain from A. F. £1500. and if you can get the balance of the Sum wanted at the same place upon my Credit or the Credit of J. G. & T. B. I shall be still more happy—at the meeting of the assembly or before you will receive for my accot. from Willie Jones £85.10 & from Thaddeus Barnes £184.10 which two Sums make £270 being the amt^s. rec^d. of John Geddy of whom I told you I was to get £400—inclosed are the Receipts of M^r. Jones & Mr Barnes for the Sums above mentioned which when you receive the money you will please surrender to them[.] I have told them both that you took up a note of mine that was due—

⁹⁴ From the Haywood Collection.

⁹⁵ Commissioner of Continental Loans for North Carolina. *Executive Journal*, 57; Thomas Blount to John Haywood, October 18, 1797, in this volume.

you will know what to say to them—if they ask any questions—since the receipt of your friendly Letter which I am now in too great a hurry to answer, or acknowledge as I ought I have mended much—so much that ere [3] long I flatter myself I shall be quite well again—I shall proceed for Phil^a Tomorrow morning. M^{rs}. B—who joins me in Comp^{ts}. to you accompanies me

I am

your sincer[e]* and
unaltera[ble]*
friend

Tho. Blou[nt]*

[P.S.]* The reason why I could not answer you from Tarb^o. is, that part of the stock stood in the name of M^r Kennie H Sumner & part in my Wifes' name—I have here obtained from T. E. Sumner⁹⁶ & J. B. Ashe⁹⁷ powers to my brother Jacob to Transfer to me. M^r Jones will pay you for me £97 more, if he receives it from Geddy sometime in this month.

Addressed:

John Haywood Esq^r.

Raleigh

[William Blount to John Gray Blount]

Knoxville Nov^r. 7th 1797

Dear Sir,

Upon the Back of a Supplement of Roulstone's paper⁹⁸ I said if I recollect well that it was as certain as the Decrees of Heaven that Cocke⁹⁹ would not be elected a Senator—He was not elected and he has written to all his Senatorial Friends that I prevented

* Hole in manuscript.

⁹⁶ Thomas Blount's second wife was the daughter of Jethro Sumner and sister of Thomas E. Sumner. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxv.

⁹⁷ John B. Ashe, a Revolutionary soldier who served in the Continental Congress and the United States Congress and in the North Carolina House of Commons. He was elected governor on November 20, 1802, but died on November 27, before taking office. A son-in-law of Henry Montfort and brother-in-law of Willie Jones, he was a member of the ruling clique in Halifax. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 199, 202-207, 281. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 330, n.5.

⁹⁸ *The Knoxville Gazette*, Tennessee's first newspaper, founded in November, 1791, and edited by George Roulstone. Ramsey, *The Annals of Tennessee to the End of the Eighteenth Century* (Kingsport, Tennessee: Kingsport Press, 1926), 557, hereinafter cited as Ramsey, *Annals of Tennessee*.

⁹⁹ William Cocke, an anti-Blount leader during the latter's governorship. He was elected to the United States Senate for a two year term in 1796, but defeated by Andrew Jackson for re-election through the influence of William Blount and John Sevier. Masterson, *William Blount, passim*.

it—That was doing as I could have wished him to have done—In the Election he stood opposed to Andrew Jackson for the six year Seat and upon the Poll being taken he had 13 votes one of whom was his [s]on* [and] [another?]* was one who would have voted against him if necessary to insure Jackson's Election & Jackson had 20—Jacksons Ele[ction]* had my most hearty Concurrence.—While I kept my name up every body who had before my arrival thought of being Candidates for the two year Seat had the Politeness to decline and had I have kept my Name up I should certainly have been elected¹⁰⁰ as you will readily believe under such Circumstances that is as I was without opposition besides I had nearly a Majority of very warm Friends—upon my declining Anderson¹⁰¹ was elected without Opposition (though not unanimously) with my approbation—without lately being my personal Friend he had been since my letter my letter to Carey¹⁰² [2] appeared my political Friend so far as not join[ing] the Clamour and on all Occasions to censure the Proceedings of The Senate respecting me.—In the election of a Representative I was really and truly perfectly neuter as to Words & Deeds—My wishes were with Rhea¹⁰³ as was a great Majority of the People had they have turned out and besides there were a number of untowards Circumstances at the moment operating against him which he took no Pains to counteract or even to stir up his Friends in every quarter in his Behalf, in fact himself & Friends considered his election sure & gave themselves no trouble on the Subject while Claiborn[,]¹⁰⁴ who is [a yo]ung Man of popular a[ddress, and all his?] Friends [in] all Quarters were[,]¹⁰⁴ as —————* Claiborne was elected and I am [c]ontent for I count him among my warm Friends.—

Congress will find in the two Senators & the Representative

* Manuscript torn.

¹⁰⁰ To fill the vacancy caused by Blount's expulsion from the Senate for conduct unbecoming a Senator. This account of Blount's popularity was denied by his foes. See Masterson, *William Blount*, 316-322, 325, n.4, 326, n.6, 326-327.

¹⁰¹ Joseph Anderson left his law practice in Delaware in 1791 when President Washington appointed him a judge in the Territory South of the Ohio. There he became active in territorial efforts for Statehood, and after this election to the Senate he served until 1815, when President Madison appointed him Comptroller of the United States Treasury. He remained at that post until 1836. *Dictionary of American Biography*, I, 267-268.

¹⁰² Blount's letter to interpreter James Carey that led to his impeachment by the House and expulsion by the Senate. Masterson, *William Blount*, 312-313 and 326-327.

¹⁰³ John Rhea, an influential early Tennessee settler, lawyer, land owner, and politician. Ramsey, *Annals of Tennessee*, *passim*.

¹⁰⁴ William C. C. Claiborne was a lawyer of Sullivan County, Tennessee, whom Governor John Sevier appointed to the new State's Supreme Court. He was elected to fill Andrew Jackson's unexpired congressional term in 1797 and re-elected in 1798. For holding his State for Jefferson over Aaron Burr in the election of 1800 he was rewarded with the governorship of the Mississippi Territory and was later elected Governor of Louisiana and United States Senator from that State, although his death in 1817 prevented his serving in the latter position. *Dictionary of American Biography*, IV, 115-116.

of Tennessee Three warm Republicans.—Cocke is as much mortified with the loss of his election as myself or my Friends could wish him to be—his Mortification is visible to all who see him.—Hawkins¹⁰⁵ has been treated with great plainness by the Legislature of Tennessee in their Remonstrance to Congress, They expressly charge him with having given Information to the Secretary of War which is *not true*, of having run the line across Holston in Error & not agreeably to Treaty to the great Injury of many Citizens and [3] finally they declare that the People of Tennessee have more Confidence in the Indians themselves than in Hawkins.¹⁰⁶—

This to be sure is lessening the Confidence of the Public [in] a high officer of the Union and according to the Doctrine of the Senate is Cause for expelling the whole Legislature (for it passed unanimously) from their Seats, provided the Senate of the U. S. had Power to do so.¹⁰⁷—

There is in this State at this Time the whole of the 4th & 3 Companies of the 3^d. Reg^t. of the standing army[,] held more generally in Contempt by the Citizens than ever I saw any other Description of People at any other Time or place and were they to extract one drop of Citi[zens' blood]* by Military authority as is said to [have bee]n* in the [case] [at Detroit under]* the eye of [t]he Commander in Chief¹⁰⁸ it is highly probable it would produce a Sluce that would require what in governmental Language would be called a Constitutional or Patriotic army to stop it.—The State of Tennessee is affected to the federal Government as it ought to be[,] alive to their Duties & their Rights, ready to perform one & defend the other.—

You know it was my opinion that in running the line at Cumberland the Point upon the Ridge dividing Cumberland & Duck Rivers from whence a North East line should be extended to Cumberland River should be 40 Miles East of Nashville—The

¹⁰⁵ Benjamin Hawkins, United States Indian Superintendent and a longtime foe of William Blount. Masterson, *William Blount, passim*.

¹⁰⁶ The line that Blount speaks of was run, in accordance with War Department instructions, in August, 1797, by Benjamin Hawkins and Andrew Pickens. It differed from the "Experimental line" run at the order of Governor Blount in 1792, and it restored much land to the Indians. Masterson, *William Blount*, 328-329. Feeling ran so high against it that the Tennessee legislature sent a protest to the President denouncing the line and accusing Benjamin Hawkins of lying. This protest was probably written by Blount and Sevier and certainly passed with their help. Masterson, *William Blount*, 331. The experimental line is shown on the map from Carey's *General Atlas* in Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 278.

¹⁰⁷ A sarcastic reference to the grounds cited for Blount's own expulsion from the Senate.

* Manuscript torn.

¹⁰⁸ General James Wilkinson, Commander in Chief of the United States Army at this period, declared martial law in Detroit in July, 1797, to assist his attack on the problems of drunkenness and desertion among troops stationed there. By this authority military courts meted out severe punishments to civilians convicted of inciting disorder, desertion, and disloyalty. F. Clever Bald, *Detroit's First American Decade, 1796 to 1805* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1948), 112-114.

Com^{rs} [4] acted differently, They run South from N. Ville until they struck the Ridge, and then meandered the Ridge until they found themselves 40 miles from N. Ville upon a South easterly Direction which is about 26 Miles East of Nashville with which the People of Cumberland are perfectly pleased—In this way of Running all the Waters of the West Fork of Stone's River are included to the Whites consequently 2 tracts of 5000 acres each & 1 of 2000 granted to JG & T Blount upon the West Fork are included and by Judge Tatom said to be well watered & worth 2 dollars per acre

These lands says Andre[w Jac]kson are _____* survey in the _____* [The] small Part (I believe) of [the]* waters of the East Fork of Stones River is left out.—all the Waters of Cumberland below the West Fork are included to the Whites.—¹⁰⁹

How high the N. E line crosses the Caney Fork I have not been correctly informed but I believe from 20 to about 25 Miles above the Mouth and crosses the Road leading from this to Nashville about 20 Miles upon this Side of Fort Blount.—In fact the Com^{rs}: staked this N. E. Line at or near the above mentioned Road and committed the Extension of it to Cumberland River to Gen^l. Winchester and I have not heard that he has finished it.—At the time of stopping[,] the Com^{rs}. affected to or really did doubt whether it would ever [5] Strike Cumberland River although they had extended it from a Point only 26 Miles East of Nashville—Hence it appears pretty certain that had they have extended the N. E. Line from a Point 40 miles East of Nashville that it never would have struck Cumberland River so that every body interested in Cumberland have reason to be satisfied with the Error of the Com^{rs} in fixing upon the Ridge the Point at 26 Miles instead of 40.—In short, in fact and in Truth the Running and m[ar]king* this line at Cumberland by [the Com^{rs}. and the] cherokees whose Com^{rs} were present has in the Estimation of [the] Cumberland People raised every man's landed Property very much as they consider it the finishing Stroke to

* Manuscript torn.

¹⁰⁹ The description of the boundaries between the Cherokees and the United States agreed upon at the Treaty of Holston in 1791 was notoriously ambiguous, particularly the description of the western line from the Cumberland to the Duck River. The Treaty, following exactly the wording in the Treaty of Hopewell of 1785, described the line as running "from a point [on the Cumberland River] from which a southwest line will strike the ridge which separates the waters of the Cumberland from those of Duck River forty miles above Nashville." This can be interpreted as meaning a point on the ridge 40 miles *distant* from Nashville, as actually run and as interpreted by General Winchester in running the line for the Treaty of Hopewell; or as meaning (as Blount wished) a point *on* the ridge and 40 miles *east* of Nashville. The second interpretation would give the settlers about 750,000 acres of additional land.

the Happiness, Prosperity and Consequence of that quarter of the State not doubting but if an Indian War should by any Means be brought on, that the U. S. will defend the Citizens within this line run and marked by mutual Consent of the Parties to the Treaty—add to this in favour of the Rise of land the Emigration this Season is very great surpassing what you can conceive and many Gentlemen of Character & Property [6] from all the Southern States Virginia inclusive are daily passing to view Cumberland and returning highly pleased expressing their Determination to move to it as soon as possible so that for seven years to come by which Time the whole of the lands at present unsettled will be in Cultivation the Emigration will not be less than it is this year.

This Country is the only place to sell the lands of this Country and your's is the Country to purchase and too many difficulties to secure Cumberland lands can scarcely be encountered and its almost immaterial where they lay so they are clear of the Indian Claims.—

Tyrrell¹¹⁰ says the lands gr[an]ted to Oliver [Sm]ith & those in the n[am]e [of his wife a]re ge[ne]rally good & that those granted to John Sheppard are of little worth.—It is certain that every Man who arrives here and determines to become a Citizen appears to feel and I believe does in reality feel an Independence & Consequence to which he was a Strainger in the Alantic States —This must be owing to some Cause which can be no other than that the Richness of the Soil and the Healthfulness of the Climate will afford him a certain Prospect to Plenty & Health if not to greater Riches.—Knoxville since my arrival here has been more crowded with Travellers than any other Place in america many of them young adventurers from as far North as Philadelphia some in Mercantile Pursuits, some for law & others land but be their objects what they may [7] the Result will be Population to Tennessee[.] In speaking of the Population of Cumberland I ought not to omit to tell you that Kentuckey is settled very closely down quite to the Northern line of Tennessee, I mean along upon red River and big barren and now extending fast down to the Banks of the Ohio along the line of Tennessee and again a Strong Settlement is formed and daily increasing upon the North Bank of Cumberland River in Kentuckey at a place

¹¹⁰ William Tyrrell, clerk of the Raleigh land office. A Blount henchman, he was apparently an unscrupulous adventurer and "bully-boy," who fled when frauds were discovered in his office. He is described below in this letter. Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, II, 152; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 172; Masterson, *William Blount*, 333-334.

long since known by the Name of Prices Settlement¹¹¹—This Settlement according to the Meanders of Cumberland River is perhaps[,] I cannot speak in certainty[,] about 50 or [60 miles above whe]*re the line dividing Tennessee and Kentuckey crosses that River and as the N. E. line from the Ridge will certainly strike Cumberland above this Settlement there is no doubt but Settlements will be immediately formed upon the South as well as the North Side. Nor is there any doubt but in the Course of a few years say three Cumberland will be settled upon both sides from this last described Settlement say Price's down to Fort Blount¹¹² and I need not inform you that the Settlements already extend from Fort Blount to Palmyra a Distance upwards of 150 Miles.—Do not suppose I exagorate or draw in too strong Colours for upon my Word and Honor I [8] have taken much pains to lay before you a fair Statement of the Prospects of Cumberland & that for your own eye & that of my other Brothers, Richard Blackledge & Edward Harris for as I before observed to you this is the Country to sell Cumberland land & its not yet quite time & your's to purchase.—

You, myself and our Friends at our Instance or prompting have raised the Fame of Cumberland to its present Height and too high for the Interest of such as wish to purchase those lands—It is now my Opinion that every Thing should be thrown out to defame it such as that the Com^{rs}. have not run the line agreeably to Treaty [i]n as much [as] they stoped at 26 [miles when they] ought to have extended 40 Miles east of Nashville in as much as there is discovered to be many Interferances of one Tract with another and many bad Titles, that much land has been very badly located and that much difficulty has arisen by the Southern Boundary of the Military land¹¹³ not being fairly extended in so much that some whole Tracts of Military Lands are altogether lost all of which by the bye is too true in sundry Instances—Again if any untoward Circumstances should take place such as white or red Person being killed or any other it might be magnified into a certain Presage of Trouble and dif-

¹¹¹ Price's Settlement is shown on the map, Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 278, to be just within the northern boundary of Tennessee on the Cumberland River. Blount's reference to it in Kentucky indicates either that it spread for miles up the Cumberland, or that the maps of Tennessee in 1797 were incomplete and inaccurate.

* Manuscript torn.

¹¹² On the Cumberland River, 70 miles upstream from Nashville, later Williamsburg. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, maps opposite 138, 156.

¹¹³ The tract reserved for North Carolina's Revolutionary veterans' claims. See James Robertson to Blount, November 2, 1796, in this volume; also map opposite the title page in James Phelan, *History of Tennessee: The Making of a State* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company for The Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1889), hereinafter cited as Phelan, *History of Tennessee*.

ficulty in this State for years to come.—But in preaching [9] These Horrors or discouraging Circumstances never for *a Moment* let it escape you nor your Friends that Cumberland is to be a great Country in less than seven years (I believe in three) and that its lands are the most growing Property in the Union, and that N^o Car^a. is the Country in which Purchases can be made to the best advantage.—

After all I have said in favour of Cumberland, I would advise you [if] possible to see it yourself in the Course of the next Summer convinced that you would not only confirm the Truth of all I have said but that [you woul]d then think more highly of it than [m]y description [can lead you] to do—To set out is all the Journey is Noth[in]g. At a dry Season of the year the Road from here to Nashville is as good as from NewBern to Washington.—I have advised and expect Harris out next Summer—If he is clever at the law as I have been taught to believe there is an opening for him & this is his Country and he certainly would be usefull to you as an agent in your land Business—But before he can practice the law he must have a year's residence, the Judges however construe this law as favourable as possible, that is they will consider his residence to have commenced from the Time he arrives here and declares to them his Determination of his having become a Citizen Resident [10] so that if he means to become an Inhabitant of this State the sooner he establishes the Commencement of his Residence the better—You may rely that his Visit to this Country will prove advantageous to him and I suppose to you[,] and I count to a Certainty if he visits it and finds its improved and improving Condition that he will become a permanent Resident.

The three Tracts upon the West Fork of Stones River as before described laying close up under the Ridge must be as healthy a situation as could be wished and if peace continues as I —————* I shall endea[vo]r to raise a hut —————* [c]orn raised there next summer and if the Collection of your retail Debts you could start about 100 Head of Cattle next October for that place it would be a good Adventure—a Cow & Calf at Cumberland is worth 20 Dollars.—Great Numbers of Cattle and some Hogs and Sheep have been carried on to that Country this year by Movers—a Cow & Calf upon Holston is worth from 20 to 25 dollars—Many of the old Settlers or rather the younger Branches of old Families have been forced to go over to Bun-

* Manuscript torn.

combe, Burke & Lincoln to purchase where the price is not half as high [11] and if you are partial to the latitude of Washington these Tracts must lay within less than six Miles of due West from your House and for myself since I am convinced from their Situation near the Ridge they must be healthy their Southern Situation would be a great Recommendation to me—It is in[v]iting* to health the advantage of a Southern Situation—I should suppose 100 or 200 acres of these lands would be spared to Watt Allen¹¹⁴ at 2 dollars per acre or if he would come out next Fall with a good quantity of Cows & young Cattle he could [have 7 years u]*se of as much of it [as neccasary Gratis]* or wou[ld it not]* be to the advantage of Maj^r [Reading] Blount to [let] Watt have a Piece of his Military Tract I mean a few hundred acres upon Condition of Settlement at a low Price and this Tract is equally good for Stock if not much better as there is a Strong Salt Lick upon it—But in all Sales of small Tracts care should be taken as to Springs for a small Tract may include all the Springs of Worth upon a large one—

I should suppose John Allen could assist Watt to a good Stock of Cattle by the Sale of some of his *Choice Spots* of pine Barrens & 100 acres at Cumberland with 10 Cows & Calves is worth more than his pine Barrens ever will be worth—

[12] Sunday November 17th 1797—

Your letter of the 4th October was the Night before last delivered to me by Abner Nash from NewBern on his way to NashVile

The only pleasing Thing in it is that you are on the Recovery of your Health for your life to your Friends and Family is worth a great deal beyond Calculation.—I can only say meet your difficulties with Firmness be them of what Description they may and since Credit is fallen and cannot be recovered with any advantage¹¹⁵ dont make Sacrafices to pay debts for paying as soon as you can or at the Extremity of the law [wi]ll be the same [use to yo]*ur Credit. You say you are determ[in]ed to settle up]* and retire to the Woods, pray let it be to Cumberland upon the Tracts upon Stones River or Patten's Tract where

* Manuscript torn.

¹¹⁴ Probably the son of John Allen, the Blount overseer and surveyor. See text following. Also, "Census 1790" in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 420; John Gray to Thomas Blount, March 14, 1796, n.78, in this volume.

¹¹⁵ All the Blounts were in deep financial distress at this time, due primarily to over-speculation and advances to the nearly bankrupt David Allison, but aggravated by the loss of the "Tuley" and the impounding of the cargo of the "Regulator" in San Domingo. Thomas and John Gray were driven so far as to offer all their property for sale. Thomas Blount to John Haywood, October 18, 1797, in this volume. The contrast between John Gray's gloom and William Blount's optimism is striking and characteristic of the two temperaments.

Willie & myself will accompany you and the sooner the better[,] but upon such a Settlement a large Stock of Cattle must be brought from your quarter of the Country—I can easily have Cabbins built ground cleared and Corn raised next Summer upon Stones River.—Since my arrival here I have been trying to obtain a Description of Patten's Tract but to no purpose I will however shortly obtain it and forward it to you.—I have said Judge Tatom¹¹⁶ values the Stone's River land at 2 dollars per acre and as you say lands must be sold at [13] any price to pay debts It will no doubt strike you that these lands should be immediately sold—I must confess that I believe in this Calculation the Judge has anticipated a few years say two and then you may add the Interest and such is the Judges and my Opinion of the value of every Foot of the good lands of Cumberland to which the Indian Claim is extinguished.—A dollar per acre is the highest price in Cash or short payment that I have heard offered for good lands upon Harper [Harpeth River] and that is not above 20 Miles from NashVile but yet I advise sell your House in Washington and & every Thing in No Car^a. but your Negroes in preference of Cumberland lands.—Negroes are the most valuable Property in this Country—Reading would do well to give away his Mills &c Settle his Military Grant in my Opinion that is if he could not better dispose of them

I say settle because I suppose a Man may Settle *in Safety* any where if the Indian Claim is extinguished especially upon such large Tracts where a Man might have as many Tenants as he pleased—It has long been the first Wish of my Heart that all my family would quit N^o. Car^a. and settle in this Country—Its a Country affording Health & Plenty and such Luxuries as we have been accustomed to can be had if Care is taken at a moderate Price.—[14] I did the Business with Granberry quite to my Satisfaction at Edenton and to the best of my Recollection I gave to some body but who I do [not] recollect to get recorded in Craven County the Deed from Wilson Blount¹¹⁷ to Granberry to which myself and Whitmell Hill were the Witnesses together with the Deed from Granberry to myself which I beleve has been proved before some of the Judges at Edenton

If the Deed from W. Blount to Granberry is not *immediately*

¹¹⁶ Howell Tatum, a political friend of William Blount. He was Attorney General for the Mero District, 1796-1797, and then was appointed to the Superior Court. From 1794 he had also been treasurer of the Mero District and had held the office of Commissioner of Land Claims. Joshua W. Caldwell, *Sketches of the Bench and Bar of Tennessee* (Knoxville: Ogden Brothers and Co., Printers, 1898), 16.

¹¹⁷ Probably a cousin of the New Bern area. The Granberry business deal had a long history. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 4; II, 69-79, 88-90.

found I would advise that a quit Claim be obtained without delay from him upon the Back of Granberry's deed to me which I should suppose under present [circu]mstances may be easi[ly] obtained through the medium of Gov. Spaight[.] Perhaps regard should be paid to the date of a quit Claim so as to free the lot from any judgt. [against] him—I advise a quit Claim because I suppose it sufficient but legal Council had best be taken on the Subject—It is true W[ilson]. B[lount]. has an a/c ag^t. Ogden which he has complained was not paid by [John] Sitgreaves but [it] was his own fault it was not paid he would not exhibit it in a given Time as he promised to do and perhaps upon an application of a quit Claim he may revive it but if he does Spaight in my opinion under existing Circumstances can induce him to sign it—If Ellis will not take it had not my attorney Majer Blount best convey it without delay to you or who else you please [15] It is dangerous to let it remain as my Property¹¹⁸

Fisk¹¹⁹ is now at Cumberland with Major King¹²⁰ with him to show him the Beginning Corner of the 45'000 acres of land & upon thats being done Fisk on the part of the Company whom he represents agrees to cancel the agreement

These lands remain upon the Extension of the line by Hawkins &c upon the Indian Side & are well sold under such Circumstances if I had not have made an imprudent application of the Price.—I mention that the Indian Claim is not extinguished to govern your Settlement with Harris

Besides the Pattents for the land sold Fisk there came into my Hands with them Grants for several other Thousand Acres perhaps about 4000 which Grants I—for the Surplusage I have forwarded to _____* Wilson the Register of Sumner County to record and return to Willie—Fis[k] himself took into possession the Grants for lands by him purchased for the Purpose of having them recorded—You may rely that no business of yours suffers by the Indolence of Willie no Man be more attentive than he is but you are to recollect that whatever questions you ask

¹¹⁸ William Blount was now bankrupt and had transferred most of his property to his half brother Willie. Masterson, *William Blount*, 314. The "attorney Major Blount" is unidentified; possibly it means Reading Blount, referred to later in the text as having a power of attorney.

¹¹⁹ Moses Fisk (1759-1843), native of Grafton, Massachusetts. A graduate of and tutor at Dartmouth, he first came to Tennessee in 1796 and settled there permanently in 1799. He was interested in missionary enterprise, history, land speculation, and education, and was a founder of what was later Peabody College. Samuel C. Williams, *Early Travels in the Tennessee Country, 1540-1800* (Johnson City, Tennessee: The Watauga Press, 1928), 458-459. See also *The American Historical Magazine*, II, 17-19.

¹²⁰ Robert King, a governmental assistant and business agent of William Blount. He served Blount and Tennessee as envoy to the Cherokee Indians during Blount's territorial administration. Ramsey, *Annals of Tennessee*, 544.

* Manuscript torn.

respecting Cumberland he has to write there for Information & to receive it when his Friend there pleases to give it nor can he account for the delay of the Post—He is devoted to such Business as he has to do and will do nor meddle with none but his own neither by Word or act.—You had best execute a general Power to him authorizing him to convey such lands as you authorize[.] to be sold there is in particular [a] Tract of 1000 acres near this place in 4 Miles of hilly red clay land which I caused to be [16] Surveyed while I was holding the Treaty¹²¹ at this place[,] which in the Course of the past Week he and Maj^r M^c.Clung¹²² have reserved and fresh marked or rather originally marked for I believe it was never before marked except a few Poles from the Beginning

I was induced to make this Survey not for the Value of the Land for at that time people here considered it not worth accepting, but with the Hope of including a valuable lead Mine for so I was taught to believe—However it appears upon the Resurvey that there are four Springs upon it so that it will divide into as many Divisions for small Settlements and probably if Willie was enabled to make Titles to Purchasers he might in the Course of a few Months or a year at most sell it at 10/Virg^a Money per acre & He will sell if Purchasers can be found in Confidence that you will authorize him in diligence to make the [title?][.] in your [memoranda the]* tract is described as lying between Whites Mill Creek and big Creek and by your Memorandum to Willie it appears you supposed it was in Cumberland and probably that the Indian Title was not extinguished. You ask about [two] Books in which the lands of J G & T. Blount were recorded meaning the two Books you forwarded to me by Farragut¹²³—I thought I had informed you that they were seized and with the Com^{ee} of Congress with all my other papers and if I did not so inform you it is true—I have no Information from those Gentry nor from Mr. [John] Sommerville to whom I gave an Order to receive them my papers and forward them together with my Clothes & Trunks to you.—I rejoice exceedingly that

¹²¹ The Treaty of Holston, 1791.

¹²² Charles McClung of Knox County, Tennessee, a political lieutenant and business associate of William Blount. As a Blount satellite McClung was a delegate to numerous Tennessee conventions. He served on the Board of Trustees of Blount College. Masterson, *William B'ount*, 233, 287, 300; Ramsey, *Annals of Tennessee*, 629.

* Manuscript torn.

¹²³ George Farragut, father of David Farragut of Civil War fame. He served in the Revolutionary War and William Blount invited him to Knoxville in 1792 and appointed him a major of the militia under Sevier. Farragut left Tennessee when Jefferson made him a master in the navy in 1807. *Dictionary of American Biography*, VI, 291.

you protested the Bills of James King¹²⁴ they too were among my seized papers and [I do not know] how They came into Maj^r. Butlers Hands except Sommerville has delivered them to him in Consequence [17] of the *General Power* I gave him[,] as you will recollect I revoked as to N^o Car^a in the Power I executed to Major [Reading?] Blount—It is certain I never put them into his Hands or intended he should have them—They may embarrass Col. King who is the most faithful of Men but they shall not avail him a Copper I mean Butler[,] in Fact I believed I had forwarded these Bills from Petersburg to you and I thought I understood you had delivered them to Molsey¹²⁵ and that they were in her Possession—I have in the fore part of this letter informed you of my political standing and as to my private I know not what to expect of the threatened Impeachment and as to my out paper none of any Consequence has pursued me but such of it as is in the Hands of Lawyers though no paper _____* and I am [un]determined * whether to suffer a Service until [it] comes on more generally for if one is served I wish all to fall on at the same Time.¹²⁶—

Billy Tyrrell has a Copy of a late law passed in this State respecting the proving of Deeds and Mortgages which he has promised to deliver safe to you—I see no advantage in communicating its Contents except to such as you have an interest serving.—I beleve you have some Cause to complain of Billy Tyrrell about the Nonpayment of some Money and there are many who do complain of him who deal with him & would hope without as much Cause as some of them state—But let others do as they please it is my Opinion yours and my Interest to treat him politely & friendly for he is loudly our Friend, he travels much and & has several active [18] young Men under his Command besides he is a sensible designing Man of Boldness and Enterprize.

You will see a Letter published addressed to him in the Halifax or NewBern paper giving an account of the Death of two Indians at their Camp upon Stones River by white persons unknown on the 27th Ult. with some Remarks respecting the Probable Consequences to innocent defenceless Travellers—It

¹²⁴ James King was among the first settlers of Knoxville, Tennessee. In partnership with John Sevier he owned and operated an iron works at Beaver Creek, and in political alliance with William Blount he was a territorial official and land agent. Ramsey, *Annals of Tennessee*, 559; *The American Historical Magazine*, V (July, 1900), 204; and Masterson, *William Blount*, 281.

¹²⁵ Mrs. William Blount.

* Manuscript torn.

¹²⁶ The reference is to outstanding debts and suits and attachments for debt. Masterson, *William Blount*, 343-344.

is true the Indians were killed and no doubt the Consequence will be Retaliation but you will discover the Remarks in the letter are intended to raise the *Horrors* with timid land Holders in No Car^a. and it is for that Reason he will publish it.—

I am extremely oppressed with the Misfortune of my dear Molsey and the more so to find it (her wound) is still so bad as will not permit her to come to me this Winter—Let me entreat you to pay her such [attention] as your own Business & Difficulties [will] permit you [pay my thanks to Read]ing, to Strother, to Richard Blackledge, To Doc. McKen[s]ee & John & Watt Allen & Lewis Blount¹²⁷ in the strongest Terms of Gratitude & Thanks.—Tell Strother that among the few officers[,] which does not exceed four[,] that are respected by the Citizens his Brother is one[.] you may also add that Cox¹²⁸ (with whom I am upon the best of Terms) is here proceeding with Temper and Firmness and a Cause of much Uneasiness to the Military officers who are commonly called *Military Gentry*.—This is the first Time I have written in spectacles which I have done with considerable difficulty—In the day I yet see to write though not to read without them except large Print

I have had ever since my arrival & yet have the ague & Fever though not as in N Car^a. yet has much reduced me perhaps 30 lb. W.^t.—I have a Doctor in the House, Fournier,¹²⁹ who is really eminent but take no Medicine [19]

I do not wish you to mention to Molsey my suggestions of going to Cumberland—I wish Mrs. Grainger¹³⁰ to be prepared to come out in the Spring with her Negroes.—Take Care of your Health & meet your difficulties with Firmness & all will yet be well, present me affectionately to Polly

W.^m. Blount

to

J. G. Blount

¹²⁷ Probably a cousin who lived in Beaufort County. He was sheriff of that County in 1796-1797, 1798-1799. Reed, *Beaufort County*, 224.

¹²⁸ Zachariah Cox, the zealous organizer of the Tennessee Yazoo Land Company, was still trying to settle the Muscle Shoals region, and Blount, formerly an enemy because of rival land speculation and official position, was now a Cox supporter. Thomas P. Abernethy, *The South in the New Nation, 1789-1819*, Volume IV of *A History of the South*, edited by Wendell Holmes Stephenson and E. Merton Coulter (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press [projected 10 volumes, 1948-]), 155-156; Masterson, *William Blount*, 335.

¹²⁹ Nicholas Honore Sidone Fournier practiced medicine and taught school in Knoxville. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 450. He died in October, 1799. See entries of October 26 and 27, 1799, "Diary of John Sevier," in S. G. Heiskell, *Andrew Jackson and Early Tennessee History* (Nashville: Ambrose Printing Company, 2 volumes, Second Edition, 1920), II, 571. His will was probated in the January, 1800, term of the Knox County Court, but the estate was settled much later.

¹³⁰ Mother of Mrs. William Blount. She came to Tennessee later and died there. Masterson, *William Blount*, 345.

*Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount*Princeton 24th Nov^r. 1797

Dear Sir

I got Home last Sunday with my Goods, I was detain'd sometime in Edenton waiting for my New York Goods, which did not arrive until their races¹³¹ commenced, and there was no doing anything until they were over, the Sloop from Newbern and the little Schooner from Washington arrive[d] at Edenton about the Same time, and I staid there until my business respecting the entering of the Sloop was fully compleated as she was a foreign Bottom—

Wednesday last I waited on Mr Tyner¹³² to know if he would purchase your Land or not, he gave me for answer that he had declined purchasing, owing to some circumstances respecting his embarrass'd Situation with his family &C. I then waited on Mr Deberry¹³² to know if he would lend me a Sum of Money, for which I would give him a Mortgage on my property or as good Security as the County afforded, all of which he [2] refused, Saying that there had been frequent applications to him since I left Home to Borrow Money and the present situation of our Government would prevent him from lending money to any Man on Earth, He mentioned several people that had a apply'd which was William Shaw, William Rece, [and] John Wilkinson, who is a very rich Man; there was no doing any thing with him, I will contrive you the Balance I owe you as soon as I possibly can and remain D Sir

Your Hb^l. Serv^t
B Coakley

Addressed: Mr. John G Blount
Merchant
Washington

Free
p post

¹³¹ The Edenton horse races began in 1799 on November 9 and lasted through the 12th. *State Gazette of North Carolina* (Edenton), November 2, 1799.

¹³² The Tyner and Deberry families were well-to-do residents of Northampton County. "Census 1790" in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 845, 846, 850.

William Blount to John Gray Blount

Knoxville November 28th 1797

Dear Sir,

Major King returned to this place from showing Fisk the Beginning Corner of the lands sold to the Company for which he is the agent namely Thomas Stover and others last night

He reports, that he did show the Beginning, spent about half a day in examining the lands, that they are rich not too much broken and well watered and timbered and that Fisk was well pleased—He adds that these lands lie up the Caney Fork about twenty Miles above the Treaty line as lately run by the Commissioners¹³³

The Commissioners line is said but (I am not certain) to cross the Cany Fork about 20 Miles from its Junction with the Cumberland—King says People are settling up the Cany Fork upon both sides quite to the Commissioner's line which will prove to you at once that people consider every part within the Commissioners line as sufficiently safe for Settlement.—The Striking of the North East Line run by Winchester upon the Cumberland above the Mouth of Rock Castle as mentioned in my last is very favourable to price's settlement (in Kentuckey) I say favourable because striking the River as it does above the Settlement, say 30 miles, people may settle upon the South as well as the North Side and Settlements their commenced in Strength upon both Sides of the River, will progress (I think) rapidly down to Fort Blount and they already extend from Fort Blount to Yellow Creek below Palmyra. Bill Tyrrell, Bill Lytle & some others will sound the *Horrors* about Raleigh, such as the Danger of Indians from the late killing of the two at Cumberland, the want of water to drink & for mills so much so that people are obliged to beat their Meal, Interferences of [land boundary] lines, bad Locations and bad Title &c &c all which you will understand¹³⁴—[2]

I by this Conveyance again write to Mr. [Edward] Harris and advise him at all events to come out next Spring or Summer as a Visitor with an eye to his and your Business if not with a Determination to become a permanent Resident and I repeat to you that I am clear that it is both your Interest and his that he

¹³³ See William to John Gray Blount, November 7, 1797, n.109, in this volume.

¹³⁴ "Bill Tyrrell . . . you will understand." Tyrrell and Lytle, Blount agents and speculators, were spreading rumors calculated to depress land prices. William to John Gray Blount, November 7, 1797, in this volume; Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 534.

should determine without Hesitation to become a Resident of Mero District as early as possible for besides his value, as respects lands he will find himself in the Practice of the law at or nearly at the Head of his profession—Willie is a faithful agent and as serviceable as he can be at this place but he cannot go to Cumberland and if he is neither a Woodsman a Surveyor or good Bargain Maker all which Harris is and a Lawyer besides—[James] Robertson & others who Willie employs are as good as any agents who are not more interested in the Service of those who employ them.—

My situation is as when I wrote you by Phipps yet it is so precarious that you can't count Nothing with Certainty upon my Services—Jackson, Anderson & Claiborne I have reason to believe will give me the earliest Information of any and every Movement made touching the threatened Impeachment¹³⁵ which I never have been able to bring Myself to believe the Senate will attempt to try if exhibited—[3] I entertain serious Hopes that you will move to Tennessee and the sooner you determine on it the better than [*i.e.* that] arrangement may be made in Time for House Provisions &c—If Nothing else is left but our Wives and our Children I consider them of inestimable Value and after so bold an Essay I have become if possible more anxious that our Sons should be well educated to the end that they may have it in their Power to become distinguished Characters and keep up the Family and Name and I venture to say that this State affords better Seminaries of Learning than No. Carolina not excepting the University and it appears to me that these Objects would be the better secured and our Happiness promoted if you and I were settled near each other—Billy¹³⁶ commences the Latin Grammar on Monday in a good Class with the Reverend Mr. Carrick¹³⁷ the President of Blount College¹³⁸ at this place who as a Teacher in every respect I am taught to believe is

¹³⁵ Andrew Jackson and Joseph Anderson were members of the United States Senate, William Claiborne of the House. No progress was made toward Blount's impeachment during the second session of the Fifth Congress, from November, 1797, to July, 1798, despite the efforts of his enemies. The impeachment charges had been made by the House in the first session of that Congress, 1796-1797, and Blount was expelled, but no action had been taken by the Senate on the impeachment charge. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 59-60; Masterson, *William Blount*, 331.

¹³⁶ William Grainger Blount, the son of William Blount. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 450, n.86.

¹³⁷ The Reverend Mr. Samuel Carrick was a prominent minister and educator in Knoxville. He was pastor of a Presbyterian church in Lebanon, about 4½ miles east of Knoxville. He was appointed a member of the Board of Trustees of Greenville College at its formation in 1794, and then was named President of Blount College. Ramsey, *Annals of Tennessee*, 627-629. He was a close and respected friend of William Blount, and was virtually Chaplain of the Tennessee legislature. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 448.

¹³⁸ Later the University of East Tennessee and at present the University of Tennessee. Both William and Willie Blount were on the Board of Trustees of the institution, which began classes in 1795. Ramsey, *Annals of Tennessee*, 629.

equal to any [in] america—I wish your Son John was here to commence with him and whenever you will send him I am ready to receive him, it is probable other Classes will be commencing about May by which Time the Buildings of the College will be in readiness for the Reception of 40 Scholars—at present & until May he teaches at his own House 4 Miles from Town—This Mr Carrick has been the principal Teacher of young White¹³⁹ a son of the General who as a law Character has risen faster than [4] any other I ever Knew or heard of and it is believed he would rank with the first of any bar at which he could practice. At the first Superior Court at which he appeared having been in the County Court Practice a year he was engaged in more Business than any other Lawyer and that in the most intricate and weighty Causes and acquitted himself with great applause—in the years 93 & 94 he wrote about six Months in my office—I have told you people are settling up the Caney to the Indian line upon both Sides but I do not recollect to have informed you that there is a Ferry established at the Mouth of that River across Cumberland in opposition to the Ferry at Fort Blount, Its about 18 miles below Fort Blount and from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ of the Travelers passing to & from this to Nashville pass at it.—I know not what else to say except repeat to you assurances of affection for yourself & Family

W^m. Blount
to

J G Blount

Thomas Blount to John Haywood

Phil^a. 30th Nov^r. 1797

Dear Sir¹⁴⁰

I have this day rec^d. a Letter from my brother Jacob dated 17th Inst. in which he says he shall by Captain Collins in a few days send you the Certificates of the Stock I mentioned to you in my Letter from Halifax together with the power of Attorney to

¹³⁹ Hugh Lawson White (1773-1840) was the son of General James White who founded Knoxville. He studied law, then served in various Tennessee State offices including a period as private secretary to Governor William Blount in 1793 and 1794. In 1825 he was elected to the United States Senate and served there until 1840. He was the southern Whig candidate for President in 1836. Ramsey, *Annals of Tennessee*, 547, 631; *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1804.

¹⁴⁰ From the Haywood Collection.

Transfer [stock] & 122 Dollars in Cash which he has rec^d. as the Interest due upon said stock up to the 1st. day of Octo. last—I hope the possession of these things will enable you to do what is necessary & right¹⁴¹—On my Journey to this place which I did not end until Saturday last, my health improved so much that I now consider myself a well man & I ascribe much of that improvement to the quiet I derived from your last friendly Letter—enclosed I send you the Presidents Speech & the answer given to it by the H^o. of Rep^s. for foreign news I must refer you to the Papers printed in this City some of which I suppose you regularly receive twice a week—M^{rs}. Blount is in very high health & desires to be remembered to you. Accept the best wishes of

Your sincere friend
Thos. Blount

Addressed: John Haywood, Esq^r. Treas^r.
Raleigh,
N^o. Carolina

Free Thos. Blount

John Wallace to John Gray Blount

Shell-Castle Dec^r. 2^d. 1797—

Dear Sir,

Before yours of the 26th. Ult. came to hand the Constant and Regulator were both arrived & I had the Ballast discharg'd [from] the Regulator, & her loaded with Salt out of the Constant—Cap William[s] will immediatly leave this for Washington, with Some Dry Goods on Board for Mess^{rs}. Ross & Parker & Schink's¹⁴² as you will see per Letters & Bills Lading accompanying, & also receipt & acct. of the freight & Storage here of s^d. Goods—For Freight up you are to make your Own Charge—The Constant will be got over Swash as soon as possible & up, Say tomorrow. My Brother arrived in the Beaver yesterday, with your letters: everything shall be accomplished as soon as may be but it is three Months before our Court sits—

I think it would be best to send down Marshe's Note with a

¹⁴¹ *I.e.*, replace the State funds which had been lent to Thomas. See Thomas Blount to John Haywood, October 18 and November 5, 1797, in this volume.

¹⁴² Customers and business associates of the Blount firm. Blount to Joseph Ross, August 28, 1796, in this volume.

request for the Capt. of the Brig to pay the money when he arrives—The Cash for the Freight & Storage of the Goods I sent up before, & also that of those in the Regulator, I intended for your self, tho' I want it as much [as] any one [2] I wish you to send me down Six common Blankets for the Negro's @ about 2 Dollors, by the first Opportunity—I will endeavour to send Mrs. Harvey¹⁴³ up some salt Hay as soon [as I] conveniently can—Complements to Self & Family—And am Dear Sir, with Esteem

Yours &c
John Wallace

Sundry Goods to John Wallace Dr—

To Freight From Phil^a. to the Castle

As per Receipt. \$10..20

Storage here &c. 5..00

\$15..20

Please pay the above Acct. of fifteen Dollars

& twenty Cents To John G. Blount, Esq

And Oblige your Hum^l. Servant—

John Wallace

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq.^r

Washington

Thomas Blount to [John Gray Blount]

Phil^a 14th. Dec^r. 1797

Dear Sir,

M^r Andrew Jackson (Senator from Tennessee) after telling me that he was authorized & requested by John & William Donelson¹⁴⁴ to call upon John Gray & Thomas Blount for a Title to the quantity of Land due them by Contract for locating & surveying, presented me with the enclosed Note, with a verbal request that I would forward it to you, to the end that you might write and on your part [execute]* the Deed & forward it to this

¹⁴³ Possibly Mrs. Anne Blount Harvey, sister of John Gray Blount and widow of Thomas Harvey. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxx.

¹⁴⁴ John and William Donelson were sons of Colonel John Donelson. They surveyed for John Gray and Thomas Blount and speculated in land. Jackson was their brother-in-law through his marriage to Rachel Donelson, their sister. Basset, *Correspondence of Jackson*, I, 18, n.2.

* Hole in manuscript.

place to be executed by me—he expects, through me, your answer—

The enclosed Paper signed J.[ohn] Hall was this day presented to me by that Gentleman with a request that I would send it to you.

The Report of the Committee¹⁴⁵ is yet in the press—the Paper I send to Capt. McDaniel¹⁴⁶ contains all the news at present in circulation here.—John Stockdell is not at this place [2] nor can I tell you where he is—for I have not been able to obtain the least information of him since I rec^d. your Letter in which he is named.—Swanzy's Bill on James Marshall Esq^r. Secretary of the North American Land Comp^y. for 306 Dollars was accepted 3^d. June 1797 for Robert Morris by Garrett Cottringer, & on the 16th of the same Month protested for non payment¹⁴⁷—I have since I came here rec^d. it in a Letter from John Summerville who went with his family about the 4th Oct [to Te]*nnessee—what shall I do with it? I ask the qestion because I can neither see Morris nor hear of Swanzy.—I fear your hope of turning your Buncombe Lands into Cash will not shortly be realized, for Doctor Hall & others who have dealt in Land & know most of the Land Dealers, say, that no sort of wild Lands can now be sold at any price, & I believe their information may be relied on: for almost all that have speculated in that or any other article to any considerable extent *are done over* [3] & such a time of general distress as the present was scarcely ever before seen here or any where else—I have lately heard an opinion expressed by a Gentleman of pretty good information that more than half the merch^s. of this City must fail, & probably go to goal, in less than a month; but with respect to their going to goal I am sure he must be mistaken—for that House is already so full that it can receive but few more if any—it is perhaps the most crowded House you ever Saw—a Bill suspending the operation of the Stamp Law¹⁴⁸ until the first day of July next passed the H of Rep^s. Yesterday & is the first Bill of a public [n]ature* that has passed either H^c.—The reason of the suspension is the neglect of the Sect^y. of the Treasury to perform

¹⁴⁵ To conduct the senatorial impeachment of William Blount. Masterson, *William Blount*, 320.

¹⁴⁶ William McDaniel, a ship captain of the Blount firm. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 18, 23, 74-75, 108-112.

¹⁴⁷ For Swanzy's bill see Blount to Sommerville, July 11, 1797, n.52, in this volume. Morris's financial collapse was a double blow to the Blounts because of the bill and because of their land operation through Allison.

* Hole in manuscript.

¹⁴⁸ A tariff on vellum, paper, and parchment. *Annals of Congress*, Fifth Congress, Second Session, 1797-1799, III, 3703.

the duties assigned him by the Law in providing the Stamps, paper &c & giving notice thereof in the dift. States.—Mr Coxe¹⁴⁹ declares himself highly pleased with the terms on which the Scites for the Light H^o. & Beacon have been obtained,¹⁵⁰ & gives you much credit for your liberality—He says both Buildings will be erected, & in a manner [4] that must please you, in a very short time—but he has not yet mentioned to me the name of the person who has undertaken to erect them

Jackey¹⁵¹ desires to be remembered to your family & Reading's—present also my Compt^s.

Y^r. &c.

Tho. Blount

LETTERS FOR 1798

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Phil^a 11th Jan^y. 1798

Dear Sir,

On Tuesday last I rec^d. your Letter of the 20th. Ult^o. which is the only one I have rec^d. from you since my arrival at this place, & therefore it could not fail of giving me pleasure but I am pleased with the Contents of it, & especially that part respecting the Tuley, for I doubt not but she will arrive, & If she does, even under the disadvantage of having two Crews to pay without a Cargo to pay with, something will be saved of what we considered lost & we certainly have need of all the savings we can make—But if she should return, I know not what can be done with her, for in the present state of our affairs to send her either to Europe or the West Indies would be little short of madness, & I suppose she would not sell for more than half her value any where—however it is certain that our affairs cannot long remain in their present state—either our differences with

¹⁴⁹ Tench Coxe, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury from 1789 to 1792, then Commissioner of Revenue until removed by Adams in December, 1797. *Dictionary of American Biography*, IV, 488-489.

¹⁵⁰ John Gray Blount began in 1794 to attempt to secure a fort and a lighthouse on Beacon or Shell Island from the Federal government. Opposition in Congress together with blunders by the North Carolina legislature led to the abandonment of this plan in 1802, although a lighthouse was erected on the western part of Ocracoke in 1798. Keith, "Three North Carolina Blount Brothers," 122-123.

¹⁵¹ Mary Sumner Blount, the second wife of Thomas Blount. They were married in 1796 after the death of Martha Baker. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxv.

France must be adjusted, or the existing Treaties between the two nations must be dissolved [2] in a very short time—& until that time arrives she ought in my opinion to be kept in port & in readiness to take advantage of the first information that may be rec^d. from our Commissioners whose dispatches are now daily & hourly looked for with great anxiety¹—It is my own opinion that France will meet our Commissioners on the friendly ground of negociation, & that harmony will be restored but the general opinion is, that she will refuse to negotiate & consider the U. S. as a nation having no Treaty with her—and if she should so act, there is little doubt but our merchants will be authorized by Law to arm their vessels & defend themselves as well as they can—In either Event the price of Vessels must rise something above what they now are—It is understood that the French have seriously determined to invade England & for that purpose have collected an army of 220,000 Men upon the borders of the English channel—Bets run high in this City that they will actually make the attempt, & there are some Bets that the attempt will succeed—but I have no such expectations—I believe they intend to frighten England into [3] peace upon their own terms, & that the expedient will produce the desired effect—for certainly the Threat will excite great alarm & occasion enormous expense—By the next arrivals from Europe we expect *very important* intelligence, & until that intelligence arrives Congress will not enter upon any very important Business—our Commissioners have not that I know of written to the Presiden[t]* or any body else since they arrived at Paris—I saw Mr Allison yesterday morning & communicated to him your request to answer such of your questions as remained unanswered—He assured me that he would do so by this mail, but I fear he will not—for he promised to send me his letter & has not done so—The Secretary of the Treasury² has not yet given any opinion upon my statement of the inconveniences attending the present Law respecting the Entry of Goods, but has promised to give one soon—in the mean time I have furnished him with an extract from your letter containing what you have said on that subject & shall further do what [4] may appear necessary to place the subject in a proper light both to him & to the Com-

¹ The commissioners sent by President Adams were Elbridge Gerry, John Marshall, and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, who arrived in Paris in October, 1797, to conclude a treaty settling differences between the two nations. Their report of failure, describing the famous "XYZ affair," was published in April, 1798. Bemis, *Diplomatic History*, 115-117.

* Manuscript torn.

² Oliver Wolcott, Secretary of the Treasury from 1795 to 1801. *Dictionary of American Biography*, XX, 443-445.

mittee of Commerce & Manufactures—I will if possible get Congress to decide upon the question this Session—I gave you notice a fortnight ago, or more, that Sommerville had left Swansey's Bill on R. Morris w^t. Major Butler & that I had rec^d. it. It is still in my possession & likely to remain so—for Morris keeps close quarters at his Country House & admits no person near him—It is said by every body that he pays no body—I sent you the Report of the secret Committee 2 or 3 weeks ago—the articles of Impeachment³ are not yet reported but it is expected they will be in the course of the next week—Loomis & Tillinghast⁴ have shipped for me to your care some Seine Twine, Rope, Leads & &^c I will thank you to send them without delay to Tarb^o. Jackey & myself are both well & join in Love, Comp^{ts}. &^c to yours & Readings families—

Y^{rs}. as heretofore

Tho. Blount

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Phil^a. 18th Jan^s. 1798

Dear Sir,

Your two Letters of the 29th Ult^o. & 4th. Inst. came together to hand yesterday at a late hour of the day—I have, however, since seen Doctor [John] Hall & shown him what was designed by you for his information—he declared himself highly satisfied & said that he expected to sell a part of the Land on Saturday next at a Dollar p/acre & receive 20000 Dollars in advance, & that if his expectation in that respect was answered he would then permit me to determine for you whether you would take an interest in the Contract in proportion to your share in the Land,⁵ or Sell out to him at 1/4 Dol^r. & acre which price he says he cannot give, because he is in common with all other people distressed for money, unless that contract should be completed—I wish he may succeed but am not sanguine in my expectation

³ Of William Blount. The "secret committee" was the investigating committee appointed by the House. Masterson, *William Blount*, 320.

⁴ A New York firm of merchants. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 334.

⁵ Dr. John Hall and John Gray Blount had made an agreement in 1794 by which Blount was to purchase land for Hall, with Hall financing the transactions and deeding Blount one-eighth of the land for his services. The arrangements became more complex as time went by. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*, especially 342, n.2 and 3, 653; Thomas to John Gray Blount, February 8, 16, May 3, 1798; J. Trenchard to David Allison, September 1, 1798; B.ount to John Hall, April 3, 1796; and Blount to David Allison, August 2, 1796, in this volume.

that he will—for I know that Men in distress are apt to count too largely upon their prospects I am well informed that Land is not an article that is likely at this time to command Cash at so high a price. The other papers the Doctor asked of you he begs you will forward as soon as possible—

I have not seen Mr [Andrew] Jackson since your Letter came to hand but I shall tell you what he says in my next. I will tomorrow or next day commence a correspondence with Mr [Robert] Morris on the subject of Swansey's Bill,⁶ but notwithstanding his promise to you that he will pay it I do not count on compassing the Cash, if however I should, I will hold it to your order—Your question concerning the Tuley I know not how to answer for No official information has been rec^d. from our Commissioners in France since their arrival at Paris, & of course the Success of their mission is doubtful—But I believe it will be best to keep her in port, even if she should rot at the wharf, for then we shall at least save the iron which may serve to make ploughs to till our Land with and my reason for this opinion is, that we can make nothing by sending her to Sea unless we can put a very valuable cargo on board, send her to Europe & have her insured in London, which I know we cannot do—I say we can make nothing by sending her to Sea with such a Cargo as we can put on board of her, because the prem. of Insurance to Jamaica is 20/Cent here, & the same back; & it is in the same proportion to other Ports—I adhere to the opinion I expressed on this subject in my last Letter—

When you ought to have rec^d. Allison's Letter I cant inform, but from me you ought to have rec^d. one by each Mail since my arrival here—the News current here you will see in the inclosed paper & that which I send to Mr Daniel—Jackey is quite well & I am tolerably so—we join in comp^{ts}. to you and your family & desire you to remember us to Reading & family—

Y^{rs}.

Tho. Blount

The President with the consent of the Senate has appointed Fisher Ames, of Massachusetts, Bushrod Washington, of Virginia, & Alfred Moore, of N^o. Carolina, Commissioners to hold a Treaty with the Cherokee Indians⁷ for the purposes expressed

⁶ For Swansey's bill and Morris's financial trouble, see Thomas to John Gray Blount, December 14, 1797, in this volume.

⁷ The result was the Treaty of Tellico of October 2, 1798. Moore quit the commission before the treaty was concluded. Masterson, *William Blount*, 335-339; Edward Harris to Blount, July 16, 1798, in this volume.

in his Message to the Senate of which you have enclosed a Copy—The sum estimated to defray the expense of S^d. Treaty is 25,880 Dollars & from the smallness of it, I conclude it is not meant that the U. S. shall pay the Indians the price of the Land they may be disposed to relinquish—If so, the Treaty will answer no valuable purpose I presume—but the Money is not yet appropriated & an attempt to appropriate a much larger Sum will certainly be made—

Thomas Blount to [John Gray Blount]

Phil.^a 25th Jan^y. 1798

Dear Sir,

I rec^d. your favor of the 12th Inst today at 2 o'Clock, & immediately afterwards called at the Goal to see Allison⁸—he was indisposed & could not give me either your Bond to Cruger or the platt of your 50000 acres of Land, but he promised to give me both in a day or two, & to send you this Evening a Copy of the account of Sales under cover of a Letter containing the information you want to enable you to answer Mr Morris' Letter—but his promises are not to be rel[ied]* on, for he has to my certain knowledge violated a thousand, & I fear he will [violate?] this—however I shall keep [h]im* to it if I c[a]n* & make him write you by the next mail if he does not by this—I have to-day since receiving your Letter had some conversation with General Sam. Smith,⁹ who you know is very extensively concerned in Commerce & navigation, & [2] very generally acquainted with the Commercial men of this City & Baltimore, concerning vessels, their value in the market at this time, & the best mode of employing them.—He says that vessels do sell both here & at Baltimore at a tolerable price, & that he is surprized at it for he knows no Trade in which they can be profitably employed & for that reason is laying up all that he is concerned in—Until we hear what our Commissioners have done, or expect to do, I think it will be best to keep the Tuley in port—for if they should adjust our differences with France she will then Sail in

⁸ In prison for debt. See David Allison to Blount, January 29, 1798, in this volume.

* Manuscript decayed and torn.

⁹ Smith (1753-1839) was a Maryland politician and wealthy businessman who served in the Revolution and War of 1812. He was a member of the House of Representatives, 1792-1802 and 1815-1822, and of the Senate, 1822-1833. He was later mayor of Baltimore. *Dictionary of American Biography*, XVII, 341-342.

Safety to any place & if they do not, C[ong]ress* will either give permission to arm or lay an Embargo—I should myself think it most ad[vis]ab[le]† to do the latter, but the Yankees, who have the Government in their [ha]nds,* will certainly prefer the former—I dined today [with]* the President & heard him say in—s—t—ory† that he had rec^d. no acc^t from [ou]r* Com[m]*issioners for 4 months past, & hence I conclude that the Reports we have heard of their being ordered away from France cannot be true—for if they had been so treated, they would unquestionably [3] have deemed it their indispensable duty to give official information of it. I suppose the fact is that they have been politely treated & kept in suspense for some political reason to us unknown, & that in that state of Things nothing worth communicating occurred—I am still of opinion that there will be no rupture between us & France. I opened a correspondence with Mr Morris on the subject of Swanzy's Bill 4 or 5 days ago through Mr Cottrin[ger]* the acceptor of it, but have not yet received an answer. The articles of Impeachment against William Blount (5 in number)¹⁰ were reported this day just before the hour of adjournment—& after they were read they were referred to a Committee of the whole House, to be the order of the day for Monday next, & ordered to be printed—By the next mail I will send you c[o]py* of them—you can easily determine by the Report what they must in substance be—Mr Schenck has informed me that the people about him are getting to be more & more pleased with my Conduct, & that they [4] entertain a hope that I will not withdraw my name at the approaching Election—I wish to know what is thought of my conduct by the people around you, & your opinion as to the time proper for making my declaration on that subject—my intention is to withdraw unless my friends generally & among them yourself should seriously wish me to do otherwise for I am sick of public life & my domestic affairs do absolutely require my attention—but I have not yet declared my intention nor do I wish to do so to anybody, until it shall be every where known that I am not implicated in the charge against W^m. Blount, as then it will not be supposed that I decline

* Manuscript decayed and torn.

† Obliterated.

¹⁰ Blount was charged with (1) being in collusion with the British in plans for a hostile expedition against the Spanish in Louisiana and Florida; (2) inciting Creek and Cherokee Indians into the expedition; (3) alienating the Indians from United States Indian Agent Benjamin Hawkins; (4) "having seduced" James Carey, an interpreter, for the carrying out of this scheme; and (5) inciting distrust of the boundary laid subsequent to the Treaty of Holston. *Annals of Congress*, Fifth Congress, Second Session, 1797-1798, I, 919.

because I am fearful that I cannot again be elected. I am unwilling too to decline while an opinion is entertained that the nation is on the Eve of a war, as withdrawing under such circumstances* would be by some, called desertion, & rather [th]an* be called a deserter I would stand at my post until thes[e] peo[ple] called me away, if I was sure that I should die at it—Jackey is well & joints me in Comp^{ts}. to you all—

Y^{rs}. &c.

Tho. Blount

David Allison to John Gray Blount

John G Blount Esq^r.

[January 27, 1798]

Sir

I have sold no lands in your name either in Robison or Bladen Counties, they are lodged as securities without Conveyance or the right of Sale or Conveyance—The 39^m Acre Tract in Beaufort has been sold and of that of 50^m in Tyrrell I never had any papers more than the Plott therefore cannot be sold—Respecting your large survey in Hyde & Tyrrel for which you sent me a deed of Conveyance intending only to operate on 100^m Acres of the Tract, that quantity I sold to M^r Morris to discharge your bond to H Crugor at ¼ Doll^r. per Acre making 25000 D^{rs}.[.] from this I received the Amount of your bond to wit 22826³³.[.] this sum I paid to M^r. Hazlehurst and *cancelled your bond*—when about to convey to M^r Morris I found your deed conveyed all the land within the bounds and expressed the [2] quantity to amount only to 100^m[;] your letter informed me that it contained infact 150^m[.] I therefore consulted with Gov^r Blount who was in the City he advised to sell 50^m more which I did to M^r. Morris at the same price dependant on the Certificate of the surveyor for the quantity for all which above 100^m (the first sale) he would pay ¼ d^r. per Acre, this sum whatever it maybe together with 2173.⁶⁸ remains due to you from M^r. Morris—I have since conveyed to M^r. Morris the whole Tract say 150^m acres reciting your Conveyance to me for the whole Tract which must be 150^m Acres more or less bearing date the 17th. June 1797. M^r. Blount promised you all that Information and I expected he had so done—In your letter of the 2nd. November you

* Manuscript decayed and torn.

complain of this sale[.] I should not have made it without advice altho [3] if the draft is correct at lease one $\frac{1}{4}$ is water which goes into the average Computation as well as land, and your letter enclosing the deed and orders does not intimate your wish not to sell all provided a price for 50^m more than in the Grant could be had—I have twice forwarded to you the sales of the Coffee, I have made another application for a bill of it which shall be forwarded you as soon as rec^d.

I am your Ob^t Serv^t

David Allison

Jan^y. 27th. 1798.

David Allison to John Gray Blount

[Philadelphia] Jan^y. 29th 1798

John Gray Blount Esq^r.

D^rSir

In answer to your letter of the 13th October[.] I can only observe that the mode you pursued with the Judge[.] ¹¹ to give information only as to general subjects respecting the lands in N^o. Carolina as specific answers[.] might operate greatly against the mode I determine to pursue with the Judge[.] whose assertion to you respecting that business is in part true but in the main part totally unfounded—It is true I told him as in the annexed schedule which I furnished you before amounting to upwards three Millions but as to the Advances, To my *Sorrow* they are false unless the Judge supposes his bonds to be of equal Value with Specie—On this Contract the Judge should have paid me 200,000 D^{rs}. and on the Additional sale made him 106672 before this date, or nearly so to wit 45000 on the 18th Oct^r. 96 on the 18th. Feby 1797 200,000 and on the 18th. the following Month 61.672 not one dollar where [2] of has he paid except by giving his bonds and for part of this money I am now Sued & part I have been forced to pay as Endorsor[.] Add to this, one Instance which the Judge in his declaration to you appears to have forgotten, That I purchased for his account 15,000 D^{rs}. in Goods the proceeds of which I paid him before sale to prevent his Confinement for which he promised to provide[.] this he did not do but suffered me to be confined for that same debt—thus

¹¹ For the deal with Judge James Wilson see Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*, especially 476, 493, 497; also see the 1796 and 1797 correspondence between David Allison and John Gray Blount in this volume.

much for balancing the Judges declaration—Until this money is paid at least a great part I will not cannot convey one foot more than I have done

I am D^r Sir
Your Ob^e Servant
David Allison

[3] The first Contract as before sent you.	
2900,000 Acres at 25 Cts	725,000.
2 nd . 208 000 Do a 100 Do	208 000
<u>3108 000 Acres</u>	<u>\$ 933 000</u>

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Washington
N^o. Carolina

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Phil^a. 1 Feb^y. 1798

Dear Sir,

Mr. Allison yesterday morning informed me that he had nearly completed a letter to you containing full answers to all your questions & that he would finish it & send it up to me this Evening; but he has not done so—I however hope that he has sent it to the post office—Mr. Morris on the 25th Ult.^o answered my message to him by note informing me that the land Commiss^{rs}. as well as himself were at that time without money, but that he would make every exertion he could to pay Mr. Swanzy's Bill before I leave Phil^a.—I thin[k i]t* can't be counted on with certainty that he will pay it notwithstanding—I have been informed to-day by the Secretary of the Treasury that the State of N^o. Caro. has not at the last Assembly, or before, ceded the Scite for the lighted Beacon on Shell Castle Island, but that they have ceded Beacon Island with intention as he supposes that the lighted Beacon should be erected there—pray how does this matter stand? I ask because I know nothing about it, & it is important that I should know, & as speedily as possible everything about it. If the State of N^o. Caro. has not ceded & will not [2] cede the Scite on Shell Castle Island, the Beacon will not be built there, nor can it be built on Beacon Island until an

* Manuscript torn.

alteration is made in the Law of the United States calculated to authorize it, for the existing Law directs it to be built on Shell Castle Island & I have all along supposed that, that Island or a part of it, had been ceded by N^o. Caro. for the purpose¹²—The enclosed paper contains the articles of Impeachment against William Blount which have been agreed to by the H^o. of Rep^s. but have not yet been carried up to the Senate nor do I know when they will be for the mode of trying Impeachments, compelling the attendance of witnesses &c. &c. remain yet to be determined by Law, & on that subject there is, in the Senate, great embarrassment for with some members it is a doubt whether the 8th amendment to the Constitution does not make it necessary in the trial of an Impeachment to call in a Jury—however the H^o. of Rep^s. have appointed their Committee of Managers & the articles will be carried up as soon as the Senate will be ready to receive them—It is however still doubtful whether the impeachability of a Senator will be admitted¹³—

No news is yet rec^d. from our Commissioners in France nor have we here any other news worth communicating, except that Matthew Lyon, a member from Vermont, the day before [3] yesterday spit in the face of Roger Griswold, a member from Connecticut, in the House—& a violent effort is used by the yankees to expel him for it, which I believe will not succeed—because it will be shewn that Griswold gave an Insult by words That in a great measure, if not fully, justified the act.¹⁴ Jackey joins me in Comp^{ts}. to you all—

Y^{rs}. as usual
Tho. Blount

P. S. I cannot ascertain that Caro. Land will
sell for Cash at any price

Addressed: M^r John G. Blount
Washington
N^o. Caro.

¹² For the difficulties with the Shell Castle beacon see Thomas to John Gray Blount, December 14, 1797, n.150, in this volume.

¹³ The Senate decided on January 11, 1799, that a Senator was not impeachable. Master-son, *William Blount*, 342.

¹⁴ Griswold referred twice to Lyon's having been cashiered from the army. Lyon, a violent Republican, later apologized for his action, and the effort to expel him failed. McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, II, 363-364.

Anne Harvey to John Gray Blount

Dear Brother

Tarboro

February 5th 1798

I heard by my Brother Jacob that you were at Greenville Cort where I suppose you saw Sharpe[.] I will thank you to let me know if he Collected any money for me or wheather he said anything about it or not, he promised to write me from there but has not done so yet, your man Mathis moved from hear to Rhonoak last week[;] I thought that you had spoke to mr Shenck to get from him what he owed you[.] I went to see him about it he said that you never said anything to him about it but said Mathis was to be hear at Cort[.] you had better send up your Account & he would try & get it for you—my Brother Jacob & mr [Josiah] Collins started on Saturday evening went as far as mr [John] Haywoods to go up to Raleigh with the Treasurer to see if Molsy was well enough to come down[.]¹⁵ they took both Carriages[.] if the weather holds good they expect to be back hear by Thursday or friday & start for Washington on sunday next with the little girls,¹⁶ I will thank you to send me a few Irish Potatoes to plant by the first oppertunity—Myself & family are well & join in [greetings] to Sister Polly¹⁷ & family I am yours

Anne Harvey

Free

Addressed: John Gray Blount
Washington

*Willie Blount to John Gray Blount*Knoxville February 6th 1798.

Dear Sir,

I some time since wrote you that I had put into the hands of Judge Tatum for collection the bonds given by Rice and Benton to Porterfield and assigned to you¹⁸—the following is an ex-

¹⁵ Mrs. William Blount was still convalescing from a fall. Masterson, *William Blount*, 324.

¹⁶ Probably the daughters of William Blount.

¹⁷ Mrs. John Gray Blount.

¹⁸ James Porterfield, a well-known resident of Fayetteville, died in 1795 while involved in land speculations with Blount. After his death, his brother John attempted to pay James's debts to Blount from claims against the estate of John Rice, whose brother is referred to here. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 655; John Porterfield to Blount, January, 1796; and extract of Willie Blount letter enclosed with Willie to John Gray Blount, March 13, 1798, in this volume.

tract of a letter from Judge Tatum to me dated the 15th January, in answer to one I wrote him since I put the bond in his hands—"On applying to M^r E. Rice he informs me that a large part of that bond has been paid in merchandise delivered, and that the vouchers are now in his hands, and has promised to produce them for my inspection, he is willing to pay the balance due in lands valued in manner talked of between you and myself—but Sir, as I have no instructions, in case part has been paid to settle for the balance I shall not attempt it until I see you about the first of March"—I yesterday informed the Judge by letter that I would make known to you the answer of M^r. Rice—I do not recollect of any credit on the bond, perhaps you can explain to M^r Rice on what account his brother paid those goods to Porterfield—I shall wait your answer by which I expect to be informed how to Settle with M^r Rice—

Our representatives in Congress teach us to believe [2] that a treaty will be held soon with the Cherokees having in view the extinguishment of the indian claim to all lands that they will Sell, and a hope is entertained that the people who have been compelled by military force to move off their lands between the line of experiment and Hawkins's line¹⁹ will be permitted to return and make crops this year—we are all well here and join in compliments to you, your family and friends—I am

Yours as usual
Willie Blount
to
John Gray Blount esq^r.

Addressed: John Gray Blount esquire
Merchant
Washington
North Carolina

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Phil.^a 8.th Feb.^y 1798

Dear Sir,

I wrote you the day before yesterday & enclosed you two Letters from D^d. Allison containing, as he says for I did not see

¹⁹ For the conflicting boundary lines see William to John Gray Blount, November 7, 1797, n.106, in this volume.

their contents, full answers to all your queries—to that information I have now but little to add as nothing has since occurred except what relates to the trial of Matthew Lyon before the H^o of Rep^s. for spitting in the face of Roger Griswold which is so disgraceful to the Court that I would, if it were in my power, for my Country's honor, conceal [it] from all the world—you will, however, see it at large in the news papers of next week—Doctor Hall informed me to-day that his *fine prospect* of selling his & your land had vanished & that, therefore, he could not purchase your share—he, however, wishes to receive the papers you promised him concerning it. enclosed is a Receipt from Cap^t. Coffin for a few articles that I shipped the day before yesterday a board the Schooner Harmony to your address the Books, China, Fiddle Bows & fiddle strings [2] are for Willie Jones & I will thank you to forward them to him, via, Tarborough, with all convenient speed & care—The Blue grass seed is my own & after taking a Gallon of it for yourself & another Gallon of it for Reading, if he should want any & if not, you may take 2 Gallons for yourself, I will thank you to forward it to M^{rs}. Harvey²⁰ to whom I have given directions how & where I wish to have it sown—it can't be sown too soon & a Gallon of it will sow any acre thick enough. The articles of Impeachment against William Blount were carried up to the Senate yesterday at 12 o'clock & rec^d. the question whether a Senator is impeachable will not, nor cannot, be decided until the Senate forms itself into a Court for the trial of the Impeachment & that I presume will not be done for some months—perhaps not until the next Session of Congress—no information may yet have been rec^d. from our Commissioners in France, nor have we any late news from Europe—all the news we have of any kind you will see in the Universal Gazette²¹—

Y.^{rs} &c.

Tho. Blount

Addressed: John Gray Blount, Esq^r
Washington,
N^o. Carolina

free, *Tho. Blount*

²⁰ Either Mrs. Anne Blount Harvey, who lived at this time at Thomas Blount's house in Tarboro, or her mother-in-law, who also occasionally lived there. Mary Blount to Susannah Harvey, September 26, [1796], in this volume; Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxx.

²¹ Samuel Harrison Smith's paper, published in Philadelphia from November 16, 1797, to September 11, 1800, when he moved it to Washington, D. C. Clarence S. Bingham, *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820* (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 2 volumes, 1947), II, 960.

*Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount*New Bern 8th February 1798

Dear Sir,

I wrote you a day or two ago, but since the post came in I have seen in the Edenton paper that William Skinner the Commissioner of Loans of the United States for this State is Dead—The Natural consequence of which is, that another will be to be appointed—It is just such an office as I should like to have²²—as I think I am capable of performing the duties of it—at the same time I dont know in whose hands the Appointment is, nor indeed should I like to make a direct application for it. Should it be in the gift of the P. of the U. S. I presume it would not *fit my Shoulders*.²³ at the same time I think it would be best for a trial to [be] made on my part for it.

I suppose that Tho^s. Blount & Jno Slate with their friends might be enabled to do me some service in the business—and shall esteem [2] it a favor of you to write to them by this post upon the Subject, and to any others that you think might be serviceable. I suppose many applications will be made for it & those from about Edenton will be the earliest, but I suppose a precipitate appointment wont be made as that office relates to the whole state.

I am with Esteem

yours &c.

Rich^d. D. SpaightJohn Gray Blount Esq^r.

Addressed:

Free

John Gray Blount Esq^r.

Washington

²² Spaight had been defeated for Congress in 1797. See Abner Neale to Blount, August 17, 1796, in this volume.

²³ As a Republican, Spaight correctly doubted President Adam's enthusiasm for appointing him. See Thomas to John Gray Blount, February 26, 1798, in this volume.

[*Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount*]

Phil^a. 16th Feb^y. 1798.

Dear Sir,

I have since writing you last rec^d. your favors of the 19th Jan^y. & 2^d Inst^t. I have written to you once a week regularly from the day of my arrival at this place, & if you will tell me how many of my letters you have rec^d. & the dates of them, I will endeavor to find out what has become of those you have not received—for if they have been intercepted it will be a pleasure to me to detect the Rascals who have been guilty of so daring an outrage—I cannot suppose that the Committee of Congress²⁴ have done, or sanctioned, any thing of the kind as I believe I have not been suspected of any thing improper by a single member of it, nor do I know or believe that any of them have ever suspected you.—I wrote you sometime ago that Doctor Hall's fine prospect of a Sale of his & your Land was blasted & that in consequence of his disappointment he was obliged to decline purchasing your part—Since he gave me that information I have not seen or heard from him—I believe he is, like [2] all other men who have done Business extensively, greatly distressed by the want of Money—I sent you last Tuesday week two Letters from David Allison containing, if he has rightly informed me, all the information that you have asked from him—but I have not yet been able to obtain from him your Bond to Cruger²⁵ although I have been to him for it at least a dozen times—He says it is among his Papers he is sure, but he cannot find it & I begin to be afraid that he has negociated it—however he solemnly swears that he has not—that it was cancelled in my presence the day he took it up (which by the bye I don't remember) & that he will find & give it to me in a few days—I shall not cease to importune him until I get it. the plot that he got from me of your 50,000 acres land is another thing which he cannot find or give any account of, but still he supposes that it is among his Papers & that he shall in his searching for the Bond find it.—Major Butler²⁶ who holds Judge Wilson's paper

²⁴ Investigating the William Blount conspiracy.

²⁵ A long-standing debt to a British merchant. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 110; also David Allison to Blount, January 7, 1796; and Thomas to John Gray Blount, March 29, 1798, in this volume.

²⁶ Pierce Butler (1744-1822) was born in Ireland and settled in Charleston, South Carolina. He was a member of the Continental Congress, the Federal Convention of 1787, and the United States Senate from 1789 to 1796 and from 1803 to 1804. A staunch Federalist and friend of James Iredell, he did business with William Blount, who nevertheless seems to have disliked him, possibly for his Federalism. See William to John Gray Blount, November 7, 1797; and Jacob to John Gray Blount, March 8, 1798, in this volume; Griffith J. McRee, *Life and Correspondence of James Iredell* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 2 volumes, 1857), I, 491; II, 516, 520, hereinafter cited as McRee, *Iredell*.

to a very considerable amount as collateral Security for the debt due him from William Blount & David Allison, has determined to sue his Judgeship in Carolina & hold his body in [3] custody, if he can get hold on it, at all hazards until he gives him satisfactory security—and he has upon my advice, Which I found it impossible to avoid giving, determined to empower William Slade,²⁷ of Edenton, where he understood the Judge now is, to commence & carry on the Suit. should Mr Slade shew any reluctance to undertaking the Business, I wish you to give him all necessary encouragement for the major's motive is certainly friendly to W^m. Blount & he will pledge himself to indemnify his agent. My reason for writing Mr. S to undertake the business is to prevent an application to you or Jacob [Blount], w^h in the event of his refusal will I fear be made. Mr Butler's power of attorney to Mr Slade & the papers on which suit is to be brought will go from me, under cover to Capt. Collin's, the day after Tomorrow by Judge Iredell²⁸—this mode of conveyance is adopted for the sake of secrecy which in the opinion of Major B is highly necessary—& I shall request Capt. Collins to sound Mr. S. & know whether he is willing to engage in the Business before he communicates to him the substance of it. In case Mr Slade should refuse to act, can you recommended to Major [4] Butler through me, any person that will act[;] if you can, you will greatly oblige him. We have to-day had in the H^o. of Rep^s. the most alarming occurrence that has happened since the commencement of our Government. It was an affray between two members within the walls of the House & in the presence of almost all the members of the House—the two members were Matthew Lyon & Roger Griswold—the former was sitting in his seat unarmed (I say unarmed because you know, & by this time every body knows, what had passed between these two members before)²⁹ when the latter (who had Philosopically forborne to strike him when he a few days ago spit in his face) walked up to him & struck him a violent blow across the head with a Bludgeon—M^r. L. Retreated to the fireplace to get the poker, but before he got there he rec^d. so many blows from the Bludgeon which M^r. G was permitted without interruption to use that he

²⁷ A lawyer who acted for the Blounts and occasionally (1800 and 1806) represented Edenton in the State Senate. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 95.

²⁸ James Iredell (1751-1799), the famous lawyer and judge of Edenton who was prominent in the Revolution and active in Federalist circles. He served on the United States Supreme Court with distinction from 1790 to 1799. McRee, *Iredell*. For the Butler episode see Thomas to John Gray Blount, February 26, 1798, in this volume.

²⁹ For this Griswold-Lyon fracas see Bassett, *The Federalist System*, 254-256.

fell, & Mr. G fell upon him,—while they were in this situation, but not until after Mr G had given several blows with his fist, they were parted—Mr. L. then got hold of a stick & renewed the fight, but before he could give a second blow they were parted again, & the Speaker who till then had shewn great anxiety to prevent interference,

[Letter is unfinished]

Thomas Blount to [John Gray Blount]

Phil^a. 26th. Feb^y. 1798

Dear Sir,

I rec^d. very early information of the death of General [William] Skinner from Cap^t. Collins who wrote to me on the day he died & requested me to recommend his Son which I did³⁰—but my recommendation was not regarded although I am pretty certain it was first received—the appointment has been given to Col. Robert Rowan father-in-law of Mr. Grove³¹ by whom he was recommended—so much for the Fayetteville vote in the Election for President; & since it has been determined by the cabinet Council that none are worthy to hold offices under the present Government but those who will swear before or after enquiry, that all Executive measures are right, I will never again recommend any body during the continuance of the present administration. a man who was a Tory during the war & still says that the united States did wrong in revolting against [2] the Government of England was yesterday appointed Supervisor o[f th]e* district of New Hampshire—& when his Toryism which had been vouched for to the Senate by the Senators from that State, was, by some members, objected to, a member from Maryland (Gen.¹ Loyd³²) rose to ask if he was a friend to the present administration, & said, if he was, he did not hesitate to declare that *he* should prefer him to the very best Whig of 1776, even if he had lost both his arms while fighting in his Country's cause—thus

³⁰ William Skinner had been United States Commissioner of Loans. Richard D. Spaight to John Gray Blount, February 8, 1798, in this volume.

³¹ William Barry Grove (1764-1818), of Fayetteville sat in the North Carolina legislature in 1786, 1788, and 1789 before his service in the United States House of Representatives from March, 1791 to March, 1803. He was a Federalist. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 104, n.1; *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 980.

* Manuscript torn.

³² James Lloyd, United States Senator from December 11, 1797, to December 1, 1800. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1227.

you see that Toryism is now the best recommendation to office, & that the Whigs of 1776 are considered the greatest, if not the only, enemies of the very Government which they themselves established—Can soldiers who survived the war with broken Constitutions at best—perhaps with the loss of a leg or an arm, or the descendants of Soldiers who died in their Country's service, hear this with patience? no—it is impossible! yet it is a truth—a melancholy truth—which as their Servant & as their fellow sufferer it is my duty to reveal to them—Let it not, however, be understood by any of them that I would invite or advise them to take up arms against the constituted authority—[3] I mean no such thing—for I love order, as I hope & believe they do, & would again risk my life in defence of the Constitution as freely as any man in America—but I would advise them to use all their constitutional power to elect both for Congress & their State Legislature men of tried & approved virtue & patriotism—by vigilance & circumspection in the exercise of their right of suffrage they will soon purify & long preserve the Government they have chosen; but vigilance & circumspection are in that respect necessary—I have not written so freely to any body but yourself & what I now write to you is intended for your own eye only—Major Butler, on Saturday last sent Judge Wilson's Bond for 174,000 Dollars, which he rec^d. of D^a. Allison & William Blount in part payment for the Salvadore Tract, to Edenton with a power of attorney to William Slade to bring suit upon it in N^o. Caro.—I have promised Major Butler to engage your influence with M Slade to induce him to undertake the Business, & hope I have not promised what I cannot perform—especially as the money which he may get upon this Bond from Judge Wilson is to go to William Blount's credit in the payment of the heaviest & most disagreeable debt that he owes in the world. [4] If the Judge should be sued as he certainly will if Mr. Slade acts as Major B. has directed him, I beseech you not to be his security, even for his appearance on the next day, on any account whatever, for his son & his lawyer have both told Major B. that he has no real Estate any where that is not encumbered with at least one Mortgage, & if you rely on his honor, or trust him in any thing, he will certainly deceive you—let him go to gaol—it will be for W. B.'s benefit, as then he will probably come forward by his attorney here & make Major B. secure according to his promise—but otherwise he certainly will not.—I have written a Letter of caution on this subject to Jacob [Blount] for his[,]

Mr Collin's[,] benefit & requested him to write to you which I hardly thought necessary—David Allison has not yet found your Bond to Cruger & lest he should have negotiated it, I think you had better send me a description of it with instructions to advertise that it has been paid & forwarn all persons from receiving it. I hope the Grampus will make a safe & prosperous voyage—no news from our Commissioners yet & our affairs with France, as far as they are known to us, stand just as they did. Jackey joins me in Comp^{ts}. &c. to you & your family I am well & as usual——

Y^{rs}.

Tho. Blount

John Sitgreaves to John Gray Blount

New Bern 28 Feby. 1798.

Dear Sir

My late illness which has been uncommonly Severe has prevented me from attending to the business relative to Mr. Ogdens³³ affairs at this time as I had intended I am still so [weak a]s* to be unable to walk any distance & nothing but a _____* that the public would complain could have induced me to have ventured here thro such bad roads & so extremely weak, I shall be down again in April & am then determined to call on you on my return from the Court here & adjust my Accounts with Mr. Ogden's Estate as it has given me more uneasiness lately than can well be imagined—

I beg you to believe that I feel very sincerely for your losses & late disasters, I hope yet you will experience a change of fortune, that will place you in the situation that a reasonable man will be content with & that a man of merit would be entitled to expect if the dispensations of fortune were apportioned to our deserts—you may rely on it I will make every exertion in my power to pay you what I have so long owed you, as soon as possible, indeed to do so to every one occupies my attention wholly at present & if I can be spared until I accomplish it, I shall feel myself much indebted to providence & in fact 'tis full

³³ Thomas and Titus Ogden were New Bern merchants. Thomas died in 1787 and Titus became something of a ward of William Blount and followed him to Tennessee, where he died in 1793. John Gray Blount was the executor of Titus's estate. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 323; Thomas Ogden, Jr. to Blount, July 3, 1800, in this volume.

* Hole in manuscript.

as much as I expect—Mr^s. Sitgreaves is with me & presents her respects to Mr^s. Blount who I beg will accept mine—I am with respect

Your sincere friend
Jn^o. Sitgreaves

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Washington

Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount

Edenton March 8th. 1798

Dear Sir

This will be handed you by Mr. King Luton who comes to Washington to purchase Coffe at the Vendue, he wants upon becoming Security for the duteys, he being a Stranger is afraid the Collector will not take him[;] should that be the case you may inform the Collector he may rely on his punctuality,³⁴ he has with him four or five hundred Dollars,

I have this day rec^d a letter from Tom of the date 20th Feby. informing me that Judge Iredell had brought on a power of attorney from Maj^r Butler to Slade, to bring suit against Judge Wilso[n] for a debt due to D. A. & W. B[lount]. 1,00000 Dollars, he says nearly 20000 but the bond is for not quite One, the Papers all came Inclosed to Mr. Collins, the bond cant[?] [be?] due until 1st of Ap^l. Slade is not in Town, he [Thomas] requested me to Say to you, he [Wilson] has no property but what is under cover and [to] caution you against being his security, he [Thomas] says he has wrote you on the same subject but fearing it may miscarry as Some of his letters to you has done, requests me to write you, (he Says secrecy is Necessary)[.] In my opinion it is bad policy to sue him³⁵ he having no property that can be got hold of, will I fear be so Iretated that he never will pay it if able, he appear[s] much distressed in mind now and is unwell and if he is sued not being able to procure security will

³⁴ A bond could be given for the payment of customs duties over \$50. Luton wished to purchase the coffee at the sale but give bond for the payment of the duty. Jacob was vouching for Luton's credit. Richard Peters, (ed.) *The Public Statutes at Large of the United States of America from the Organization of the Government in 1789, to March 3, 1845* (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1848-), I, 42, hereinafter cited as *United States Statutes*; Benjamin Atkinson to Blount, July 7, 1796, n.148, in this volume.

³⁵ See Thomas to John Gray Blount, February 16, 26, 1798, in this volume. Jacob's conclusion differs completely from Thomas'.

probably make a finish of him and the [2] debt finally lost, you have had a conversation with him on the Subject [and] will be better able to Judge, if it hant got out of him Butler has W. B. & D. A to resort to, but they have no one but him, this is merely my opinion, you know by the Laws of this State he can come out in 20 days and then bid them defiance³⁶

I am with respect
your Affectionate
Brother
Jacob Blount

P.S Since writing the above have opened this to Inclose the Invoice of the goods, which you must put the prices to from the Invoice you have & take the Oath before the Collector³⁷ and forward it to me, perhaps it will be Easier to Ccopy the Invoice a New

J B^t

Addressed: Mr. John Gray Blount
Washington

fav^d by
Mr. Luton

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Phil^a. 10th March 1798

Dear Sir,

Your favor of the 25th Ult.^o did not come to hand until the night before the last & of course you must know that I have not had time to obtain any satisfactory information as to the probability of finding a mark[et]* for any of your Land—I will attend to that Business, knowing it to be important to you, & give you the result of my enquiry as soon as possible—but cheap as you offer it all[,] I can mention no circumstance that will authorize you to calculate upon a Sale of any of it: for here we see nothing that does not indicate the approach of a general Bankruptcy, except our Revenues from import & Tonnage Duties,

³⁶ By a law of 1773, a debtor after being in jail for 20 days might petition for a hearing and, upon giving up his goods, be released. Clark, *State Records*, XXIII, 900-904.

³⁷ The law required the importer to swear to the accuracy of an invoice of his goods which he gave the collector. *United States Statutes*, I, 39-40.

* Hole in manuscript.

which, notwithstanding the spoliations upon our commerce have been so great from two nations that they have become the only topic of conversation every where, have encreased considerably—and this astonishing fact must convince you [2] & every body else that between our present situation & a State of open War there is a monstrous difference—such an one as should induce us to endeavor by all possible means to prevent an open declaration of War on either side. you & I, like many other Individuals, have suffered exceedingly, but the nation at large is, I conceive, nay I am sure, richer than it would have been, if there had been no war in Europe—But in this situation which I call happy compared with a State of War, I fear we shall not long continue for many of the members in the majority of both Houses, do not hesitate to declare, in common conversation, that the period has arrived when War ought not to be deprecated & I am far from being convinced that the President himself knows rightly how to estimate the Blessings of peace.—from these things & others which I could not enumerate in the compass of a Letter, I calculate that War measures will be adopted before the end of the Session, but perhaps I ought not now to say so, [3] because we have not (I mean Congress) seen all the information that has been communicated by our Envoys, & what we have seen, has not been acted upon. The man said to have passed through Fayetteville has not arrived & of course his news deserves no credit, but I think it highly probably that our Envoys have ere this left Paris, as when they wrote to the President there was not the most distant prospect of their accomplishing the object of their mission—& I fear it will be found that their orders were predicated upon a state of things that was expected to be produced by Pichigru's conspiracy³⁸—one reason for thinking so, is, that the President last Summer predicted that the Republic of France would not continue to exist for three months from that day, which was some time in August. the act ceding shell castle Island has never been seen here, you will therefore see the necessity of sending it; & if it has expired, you will please say what your opinion is of the probability of its being renewed, as the Beacon will be begun as soon as this information [4] is obtained provided it is favorable.³⁹ What to say about being

³⁸ Charles Pichegru (1761-1804), a former Revolutionary French general and hero who repudiated the Revolution and plotted against both the Directory and Napoleon. Pierre Larousse (ed.), *Grande Dictionnaire Universel du XIX^e Siecle* (Paris: Administration du Grande Dictionnaire Universel, 17 volumes, 1873), XII, 943-944.

³⁹ The beacon was not built on Shell Castle Island. See Thomas to John Gray Blount, December 14, 1797, n.150, in this volume.

a Candidate at the next election I do not know—I have said in answer to several private Letters that I may be considered a Candidate until I declare otherwise but at the time of saying so I intended to declare otherwise if circumstances should enable me to decide in my own mind that I could with propriety, that is without incurring the charge of deserting in the hour of danger, withdraw—at present I cannot decide that question of propriety, but am inclined to think that if the people, or a respectable part of them, wish me to serve, I ought to be a Candidate—but while I declare that this is the impression on my mind, & that I had rather make any sort of sacrifice than appear ungrateful & be called a Deserter, I assert upon my honor that I wish to retire, & will do so if my friends think that I can do it with propriety & honor⁴⁰—will you be kind enough to favor me with your own opinion & the opinions of such of my friends as you may have [5] an opportunity of [con]*sulting? In the mean time it may be understood, or said, that I feel myself bound by the ties of honor & gratitude to serve if the people wish me to do so: or, if you like it better, you may cause it to be said in any other manner that I am a Candidate—for I do not feel myself at liberty to say the contrary.—I have this day answered a letter from General [William R.] Davie upon this subject—thus—after mentioning facts as to my wish to retire & the reasons for not declaring heretofore—I say—if a declaration at this early day is necessary, I must declare that I am a Candidate—he wrote to know whether I was disposed to serve in a manner calculated to make me believe that he wishes me to serve—but I believe no such thing—Jackey joins me in Comp.^{ts} to Polly & all other friends—

I am

as usual

Y^{rs}. Tho Blount

Addressed: John G. Blount, esq^r.

free, Tho. Blount

Washington,

N^o. Carolina

⁴⁰ Thomas was disturbed both by the increasing Federalist strength in Congress deriving from bad relations with France and by William Blount's disgrace. Later the land fraud indictments destroyed his chances of re-election. See Thomas to John Gray Blount, May 17, 1798, in this volume, and Report of Legislative Committee Investigating Land Frauds, June 6, 1799, in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

* Hole in manuscript.

Willie Blount to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]⁴¹

Knoxville March 13th 1798

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 11th Dec^r. last was handed me a few days past by M^r. Williams, shall act agreeably to your request—my brother William desires me to say that the contract between him and General [James] Robertson for the General's share of land is void, therefore the General is entitled to his share as formerly—Doctor Fournier⁴² who goes from this to day for Raleigh with an intention of accompanying my brother William's lady to this place is the bearer of this letter thus far, and perhaps if he has time he will visit you—Make my compliments to your family and others of my friends and believe me to be with affection,

Your Ob^{nt}. Servant
Willie Blount
to
J. G. Blount esq^r.

Addressed: John Gray Blount esquire
Merchant
Washington
North Carolina

Doctor Fournier

[enclosure]

Extract of a letter from Willie Blount to John G. Blount dated January 8th 1798—"Judge Tatum was here in October and on the 28th of that month, I put into his hands John Rice's & Jesse Benton's bond to Porterfield, and asked him to use his endeavours to have it settled, which he promised—It was my brother William's opinion as well as my own, that you would take lands to which the Indian claim was extinguished in discharge of the bonds, and that the land and negroe should be valued in such manner as the Judge and M^r Rice the administrator of John Rice's estate should agree on—

⁴¹ The extract printed below this letter is, on the manuscript, written above the letter along with a duplicate of Willie Blount's letter of February 6, 1798. Willie Blount was apparently briefing his recent correspondence for his brother. Since the extract was written at the same time as the March 13 letter it is printed here as of that date.

⁴² William Blount's physician. See William to John Gray Blount, November 7, 1797, in this volume.

On the 19th of November received the amount of your account against Captain Rickard,⁴³ to wit, 163 dollars, equal to £81 . . 10 . . 2 North Carolina money—you forwarded the account in good time, a few days after settlement Rickard^d marched for fort Massac, a post on the Ohio—I have not received any information from General Robertson about the resurveying of your land, nor from him and Colonel Hays⁴⁴ respecting the valuation of land for Colonel [Robert] Love [2] since last September when I gave the papers to General Robertson, altho' I have several times written to them on the subject"—

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Dear Sir,

Phil^a. 29th Mar. 1798

According to the expectation expressed to you in my last Letter I find there is no market for your Land here at any price—Mr Stockdell was here Some weeks ago going to New York & I asked him to enquire there if any thing could be done for you, & if there could to let you know it by letter from that place or Richmond to which place he intended soon to return. If you have not heard from him that your land can be sold at a price suitable to your purpose, you may conclude that they cannot be sold any where at this time. I mentioned to you some months ago, or intended to mention, that I had rec^d. from D. Allison Grants to J G & T. Blount for 25,000 acres on the Misissippi which were brought from Mountfloreance by Romaine & del^d. to William Blount⁴⁵—there were brought [2] with them, as appears from Mountfloreance's Letter, Military Grants, among which was Col. Pattens, for about 11,000 acres—but I have never seen them, nor can I hear what has become of them—What shall I do with the Grants I have and what do you know of the Military Grants? Allison & Hopkins have each told me a dozen times or more that they would give me the accot. taly [which] you wrote for, & yesterday morning for the last time they both together made

⁴³ William Rickard of the United States Army was commanding a company of militia stationed at Knoxville. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 369, 448, 449-451.

⁴⁴ Robert Hays was a political and business associate of William Blount. A brother-in-law of Jackson (he too married a daughter of Colonel John Donelson) he was a close friend of James Robertson and one of the most powerful figures in Tennessee's territorial and early State history. Carter, *Territorial Papers*, *passim*; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation in Tennessee*, 203; Bassett, *Correspondence of Jackson*, I, III, *passim*; Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 507.

⁴⁵ For Mountfloreance's business see Blount to Mountfloreance, March 18, 1796, n.87; and Mountfloreance to Blount, July 21, 1796, in this volume.

solemn protestation that I should receive it to day, but I have not yet seen it—In short they are such base men that no confidence can be reposed in them—I believe that D. A. is incapable of speaking truth—I have alternately coaxed & abused him, but can do nothing with either way—respecting your Bond to Cruger, which he has not yet produced & says he cannot find, he has told me at least an hundred lies—I suppose [3] the truth is that he has it & does not choose to give it up, for I have seen on his Book an Entry dated 18th. Feb^y. 1796 that he had sold to R. Morris 100,000 acres of your Land at 25 Cents p acre, & rec^d. of him his notes payable to Henry Cruger, at 27 months, to amount of 22,826 Dols. 33 Cents being the full amount of your Bond to said Cruger that day taken up, but I am puzzled to find out his reason for withholding it. I shall continue to tease him till I get it—in the mean time I advise you to make your self whole, if you can, out of any property he may have any where that you can get hold of, for I believe he would for the sake of cheating, cheat himself if he could find no body else to cheat.

I have not rec^d. a single line from William or Willie since I came to this place, but Willie in a Letter of late date has said to M^r [William C C] Claiborne that William still continues [4] in a low state of health—and that is all I know or have heard about either of them. You will see by my Letter of today to Cap^t. M^cDaniel that my opinion that the nation is to be plunged into a war against France has been strengthened since the Date of my last Letter—and I declare to you that I am now perfectly convinced that war is the object not only of the President, but of very many members of both branches of the Legislature—leading members of the majority of both Houses have publicly within the last 3 Days uttered Sentiments that prove it beyond the possibility of doubt; & yet they wish it to be believed by the people at large that they desire peace—In the vicinity of this place & indeed as far North as Massachusetts, the people are alarmed & begin to petition that measures calculated to produce War may not be adopted; & a manly expression of the public opinion [5] if timely made in that way, may save us; but I believe that nothing else can. the Session will probably be a very long one, & it will certainly be a very expensive one—for besides fortifying our ports & harbours & making other expensive preparations for internal defence, it is insisted by the majority that we must buy or build (& we know we cannot do the latter) twelve Sloops of War of from 18 to 22 Guns.—and purchase or

lease a foundry for casting Cannon. I suppose the extraordinary appropriations of the present year will amount to at least 3,000,000 Dollars—by some it is thought they will amount to nearly double that Sum—& where, you will naturally ask, is the money to come from—I suppose a Land Tax, although it has not yet been talked of, is certain⁴⁶—& perhaps it will be found necessary to suspend the payment of the Interest of the public Debt, & fund it at the end of each quarter for the salutary purpose of making the Debt itself larger—[6]

It seems to me that the Eastern people wish & are endeavoring to bring about dissolution of the Union—and it is to be feared that the measures they are now pursuing will sooner or later produce that dreadful effect.

Jackey joins me in Compt^s. to Polly, Sukey, & c.

I am

as usual

Y.^{rs}

Tho. Blount

Addressed: John Gray Blount, esq^r.
Washington,
N^o. Carolina

David Allison to John Gray Blount

Dr Sir

[April 5, 1798]

By Col^o. Blount I have learned the situation of my lands in Jones & c as well as from Mr Blackledge, every exertion has been made to send forward the redemption money, but my situation here cooped in a jail⁴⁷ has rendered negotiation difficult added to the loss of Confidence and the Scarcity of money[.] I had nearly lost every hope of saving it, but this night my Fears are somewhat alleviated *the money is procured say 1500 Dollars* and will go tomorrow by Express—It is done through Mr Shannon⁴⁸ who holds a lien on the Tract in Beaufort—the money

⁴⁶ On July 14, 1798, a direct tax was levied on houses, lands, and slaves. *United States Statutes*, 600.

⁴⁷ Allison was imprisoned for debts that had been growing increasingly hard for him to meet since 1795. Bassett, *Correspondence of Jackson*, I, 16.

⁴⁸ William Shannon was a Philadelphia businessman of apparently modest capital. Investing cautiously, he obtained liens on Blount and Allison lands through loans in 1798, and acquired some of these lands upon Allison's death. Shannon worked with Blount to extricate Allison's lands from claims on the latter's estate. He later engaged in planning commercial ventures with the Blount's, especially in making shingles for sale in the East. See correspondence in this volume.

could not be had from Bank in time for the Post and if it could he prefers sending to know both the quality of the Tract & that it is perfectly clear as I assured him it was [.] to this I hope you will [2] attend [;] much may depend on this ecllairissement as he promises *if clear* that he will lend me further aid to release you from the other incumbrances occasioned by me I mean those Stated to Col^o. B[lount], which he has Shewn me—

You may depend on the Cash as fast as it can go by the person entrusted by him therefore you must Stop the Sales until it arrives—I will Send you a list as fas[t] as I can who are the holders and where I am not [a holder] let the land be Sold and buy it in⁴⁹—this is not common honesty, but with me it is plain dealing at least *doing as I am done by* which in Warfare is fair dealing[.] I will write you again by the Express and am respectfully

Your Ob^t Serv^t.

David Allison

April 5th. 1798

Addressed: John Gray Blount
Washington
North Carolina

David Allison to John Gray Blount

[April 9, 1798]

Dear Sir

On this morning the Express Sets off for your place with the money for the Taxes which I flatter myself will be in time to answer the purpose — I promised to send you a list of the holders by him, at that time I expected [that a] part was secured to a man who has been pursuing rigorous measures with me[;] if so I should have permitted that to have been sold—but on searching I find that it is all in the hands of myself and friend — I have a Gentleman from New York with me through whom I am attempting an Arrangement for Cash whether I shall succeed or not is yet uncertain I shall however pursue such measures as may appear best adapted to relieve you, there is no chance for my release unless through a late law made

⁴⁹ *I.e.*, let the land be sold for taxes and then buy it back at a tax sale. See Strother-Hodge Indenture of April 27, 1798, in "Other Papers for 1796-1802," in this volume.

here to prevent imprisonment,⁵⁰ if I was out I might probably effect much more than I now can—in many Cases people [2] with whom I have business will not come to me & I cant in that Case go to them—

I beg that you would obtain Certificates of the Taxes being paid and send me them, this is a great Bugbear to such as would dabble a little in the business lest lands should be sold for Taxes—

You sent me long ago a draft for 250^m acres of Buncombe land and observed that the patent would go forward in a short time, it has never come to hand

I have as well as Mr [Thomas] Blount repeatedly applied for the sales of the Coffee⁵¹ and cant get them or anything for them except a promise that they shall be had and this as often as made is broken

I beg that you would make out an Account of every transaction between us, (at leizure) both as to land and every other thing that has passed between us this is absolutely necessary that I may arrange [3] for you in case I am forced to surrender—I sent [o]n* notes to William Blount for thirty thousand dollars on your account that property there might be covered by entering up a Judgement for the Amount which I gave authority to do⁵²

If you have any lands in my name send them forward by the bearer as I am determined I will release you if I should pledge all the lands I have to do so & through Mr Ramsey I have hopes to get India Goods on them at New York joined with some Military land in that state which I hold

I am D^r Sir

Your obed^t Servant

David Allison

Ap^l. 9th 1798

John Gray Blount Esq^r.

⁵⁰ On April 4, 1798, the Pennsylvania Assembly passed an act which was intended as the basis for a general bankruptcy act, but the judiciary circumvented this legislation, and imprisonment for debt was common in Pennsylvania until well into the 1830's. Harry Elmer Barnes, *The Repression of Crime: Studies in Historical Penology*, (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1926), 204.

⁵¹ Probably Blount had sent coffee to Philadelphia to be sold at public auction to raise cash.

* Hole in manuscript.

⁵² Allison sent \$30,000 in notes on himself to William Blount so that his land could be levied on by John Gray and Thomas Blount and thus saved from the other creditors.

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Dear Sir,

Phil^a. 3 May 1798

Since I rec^d. your favor of the 13th Ult^o., & more especially since I rec^d. that of the 20th. I have been constantly endeavoring to provide the means of relieving your distresses, but I have not yet accomplished the object—Mr A[llison] has amused me by promises that he would, & assurances that he could, furnish the Sum wanted—and Doctor H[all], seems extremely anxious to close with your proposition to take the 50th & give for the surplus of it & your share of the 100th—10 Cents p Acre but I doubt whether either of them can raise the Cash for the Doctor acknowledges that he is exceedingly pushed, which I know is true, & on A's promises & assurances no reliance can be placed—therefore I cannot encourage you to depend on my Exertions—for before I applied to these Gentlemen I tried, through other frinds, & Brokers, sufficiently to ascertain that no Lands that you or I possess would raise the money either on Sale or Mortgage—It is a fact that money can be put out in this City upon the best landed security at 40 P C^t to Interest & Doctor Hall assures me that for 16,000 Dollars, if he could command them, he could this day purchase a Landed Estate in this neighbourhood which has sold for, & is now supposed to be worth, 100,000 Dollars. yet he says he would purchase your land at ten Cents, if he could raise money enough, in preference to this Estate, because he feels confident that it is a much better bargain & that he shall ere long find a purchaser for it at a Dollar p acre or more—He is now seeking Mr Evans⁵³ (whose Christian name & residence I wish you had given) & if he should find him he will endeavor by every means in his power to purchase his Judgment or secure a six months stay of his Execution which [2] I suppose will answer every purpose in relation to his demand—the Balance of the Sum of 3500 S if I can by any means procure it (for I shall not cease to exert myself) I will send to you in post notes or some other way by the next mail—perhaps between H[all] & A[llison] I may get it; but I repeat—Don't rely on me—the chance is desperate. The new Ship is considered unfit for public Service, as much I suppose because she is ours as any thing else,⁵⁴ & cannot be sold here at any price—I know not what will,

⁵³ For John Evans see David Allison to Blount, August 19, 1796, in this volume.

⁵⁴ Thomas was depressed over the family disgrace caused by William Blount's conspiracy and impeachment.

or can, be done with her or any other vessel unless we should wait for the war, which seems to be so fast approaching, & fit her out as a privateer—but *then* there would be nothing to take for since the Spaniards have given up the ports on the Mississippi,⁵⁵ which may be depended on, we surely shall not go to War against them—We have passed in both Houses, a Bill authorizing the Pres^t. to build & equip ten Gallies—I suppose we shall have two of them for N^o. Caro. We shall certainly have a direct Tax on Lands, Houses & Slaves to amount of 2,000,000 Doll^{rs}. P Annum or a heavy additinal Duty on Salt, which our brethren of the North because they enjoy the Sweets of a drawback, alias Bounty, would prefer—It is not expected by anybody that Congress will rise before the first week in June, & by many it is not expected that they will rise before July—as you are not fond of politics, or rather have not time to read them I will close my letter with Comp^{ts}. to Polly & your family generally in w^h. I am joined by Jackey—

Y^{rs}. & c.

Tho. Blount

Addressed: John Gray Blount, Esq^r.

Free. Tho Blount

Washington,

N^o. Carolina

Thomas Blount to John G[ray] Blount

Dear Sir,

Phil^a. 17th May 1798

My friends Mr Burges & Mr Barnes⁵⁶ by Letters this day rec^d. have informed me that at Halifax it is reported that I am implicated in the fraudulent Land Speculations lately detected at Raleigh & more fully, though not openly, investigated at Hills-

⁵⁵ On March 30, 1798, Natchez, the chief post in the disputed territory, was evacuated by the Spanish forces. The right of deposit in New Orleans remained a point of dispute after the territory involved was cleared. Arthur Preston Whitaker, *The Mississippi Question, 1795-1803* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Incorporated, 1934), 66, 89-90.

⁵⁶ Dempsey Burges (1751-1800), a Revolutionary veteran, was a Representative in Congress from North Carolina from December, 1795 to March, 1799. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 627. Mathew Barnes was a citizen of Halifax, otherwise unidentified. "Census 1790," Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 596.

borough⁵⁷—and I could not have been more astonished if I had been charged by the Directory of France of being the murderer of Louis the XVI. How & where in God's name can this Report have originated? Is it possible that any of the agents that have been employed by you to locate & Survey the Lands of J G & T B can have committed frauds in a way that could draw Suspicion on us, or either of us? I ask because I really do not understand enough of the mode of transacting Land Business to form an opinion on the subject, & the Information that such a Report prevails, although I am Conscious that it cannot be True & have great reason to believe that it has been fabricated merely to operate on my Election, runs me almost mad—for God's sake trace it to its origin & let me know whence it came, without delay—I have answered Mr. Burges & Mr. Barnes that it is false as Hell & written to Ed Jones, the Solicitor, demanding of him to contradict it which I am sure he can do & trust he will do.—on shewing my Letters to Mr. [William B.] Grove who is a regular Correspondent of Mr [2] Jones's, he declared to me upon his Honor that he had never before heard it suggested that I was implicated or suspected, but he confessed that he had rec^d. Letters which intimated that W. Blount, W. Polk⁵⁸ & some other Respectable Characters were at least suspected—Barnes' Letter mentions that the names of the persons found guilty by the grand Jury have not been announced & are to be kept secret until they are apprehended for the purpose of giving Bail. This Report, false as it is, will doubtless injure my Election, & yet it seems to render it more necessary than ever that I should hold a poll—To what curses am I doomed! I am in 2 weeks to declare positively that I am, or that I am not, a Candidate & at this moment I don't know how to decide the question. But the misfortune of which I have spoken, in itself great enough to make the man who suffers it curse God & die, is not the only

⁵⁷ These frauds consisted principally of the issuing by entry takers of duplicate warrants which the recipients used to gain thousands of acres for which they paid nothing and (in the case of military lands in Tennessee) for which they had no legal right to file claims. The frauds were brought to light by Andrew Jackson, who discovered the evidence in 1796 and notified Governor Ashe of North Carolina. A secret investigation was then begun by the North Carolina legislature which indicated that the malefactors included James Glasgow, Secretary of State of North Carolina, John Sevier, Stockley Doneison, William Tyrrell, William Blount, and John Gray and Thomas Blount. Masterson, *William Blount*, 332-334; Robinson, *Davie*, 311-312. See also the election circular by "An Elector," [n.d.]; Governor Ashe to the General Assembly, 1798; Memorial of John Gray and Thomas Blount, December 16, 1799; and Report of Legislative Committee Investigating Land Frauds, June 6, 1799, in "Other Papers for 1796-1802," in this volume.

⁵⁸ William Polk (1758-1834) was born near Charlotte, North Carolina. He was an officer in the Revolution and in 1788 he was appointed a surveyor general of the land office, with headquarters in the present Davidson County, Tennessee. A strong Federalist, he was made Supervisor of United States Revenue by President Adams. He was an active land speculator. *Dictionary of American Biography*, XV, 43-44; Polk to Blount, January 6, 1801, in this volume.

one that afflicts me—all my hope of getting you money & paying James's Judgt⁵⁹. is disappointed once more—for in fact in money matters there is scarcely anybody in this place to be depended on—I thought all day yesterday that both the objects would be accomplished before night, & I have thought the same thing all this day—but it is now 12^o Clock at night & neither is done I am however still told that both shall be done this week, & perhaps to morrow, & if they are I will dispatch an Express immediately—but after experiencing two disappointments where I did not expect one, I can't say that my Confidence is undiminished & therefore you must not too far depend on my Exertions if any thing better [3] can be done—Willis Alston⁶⁰ owes me 1000 Dollars payable the first day of June & Macon,⁶¹ who contracted the Debt for him, at my request, wrote him about ten days ago to request that he would send it here, as it is to be here paid to the Miss Farmers to whom it belongs—but he about the same time wrote to Macon & desired him to tell me that he had it ready & would pay it at Tarborough about the 25th Inst. as he was at that time going there Electioneering—now under these circumstances it is difficult to say what he will do—but should he pay, or have paid, it at Tarb^o., you may rather than let your property be sacrificed use it, I had however rather, if you can so manage [matters that?]* you would hold it until I inform you that I have rec^d. a like Sum here for the Girls are in such distress that they must have their money by the middle of June at farthest & ought to have the first—The provisional Army Bill for 10000 men will pass to-morrow when it is to be read for the last time with it's amendments—The Ship is not yet sold nor does the prospect of selling her brighten.—I can form no opinion when

⁵⁹ Able James and Company, a firm of Philadelphia merchants with whom the Blounts had long done business, had a judgment against the Blounts. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 139, 337; Thomas to John Gray Blount, May 24, 1798; and David Allison to Blount, July 16, 1798, in this volume.

⁶⁰ Alston, of Halifax, was active in North Carolina politics for many years. A nephew of Nathaniel Macon, he served in the House of Commons, 1790-1792, 1820-1821, and in the State Senate from 1794 to 1796. In 1798 he defeated Thomas Blount for a seat in the United States House of Representatives, and served in the Sixth through the Thirteenth Congresses as a War Democrat. After further service in the North Carolina House of Commons he was returned to Congress from 1825 to 1831. He died in April, 1837. Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount, October 18, 1798, in this volume; *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 475-476; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 203.

⁶¹ Nathaniel Macon (1757-1837), of Warren County, North Carolina, was the Jeffersonian wheel horse in the House of Representatives from the Second to the Thirteenth Congresses, Speaker of the House, 1801-1807, and United States Senator, 1815-1828. William E. Dodd, *The Life of Nathaniel Macon* (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1903).

* Manuscript torn.

Congress will rise the subject is not yet talked of—Jackey is well & joins me in Love & c. to Polly & c.—

Yours as usual
Tho. Blount

Addressed: Mr John G. Blount
Washington
N^o Carolina

William Blount to Colonel Thomas Hart

Knoxville May 18th 1798

Dear Sir.⁶²

By the last Post I received your Letter of the 3^d. Instant. You say you wish to sell your lands in this State and ask my opinion as to their Value and manner of Sale whether altogether or divided into small surveys—I am yet so uninformed as to the situation and quality of the Lots which have fallen to you in the Division⁶³ that at this Time I can offer you no Opinion as to its worth nor can such an opinion be formed with any degree of accuracy until the Lines of Division are actually run and marked and I would advise you to cause this to be done as early as conveniently practicable by your agent at this place, Mr Houston, who is himself a very good Surveyor and fully equal to any Business you may please assign him as your agent—He is here viewed as a man of much Integrity and activity in any Business in which he will engage.—You inform me you have forwarded Money to Mr. Houston to pay up the Taxes upon your own part of the lands in Henderson's Survey as it is commonly called and refer him to J. G. Blount the Executor of Col Salter⁶⁴ for the payment of the Tax upon the part by you sold to Col Salter—without Determining whether you or the estate of Col Salter are bound to pay this Tax rather than the land shall be sold and probably sacrificed and relying that you or Salter's estate will repay me as shall appear just and proper I will pay it.—I will embrace this occasion to remark to you that there certainly must

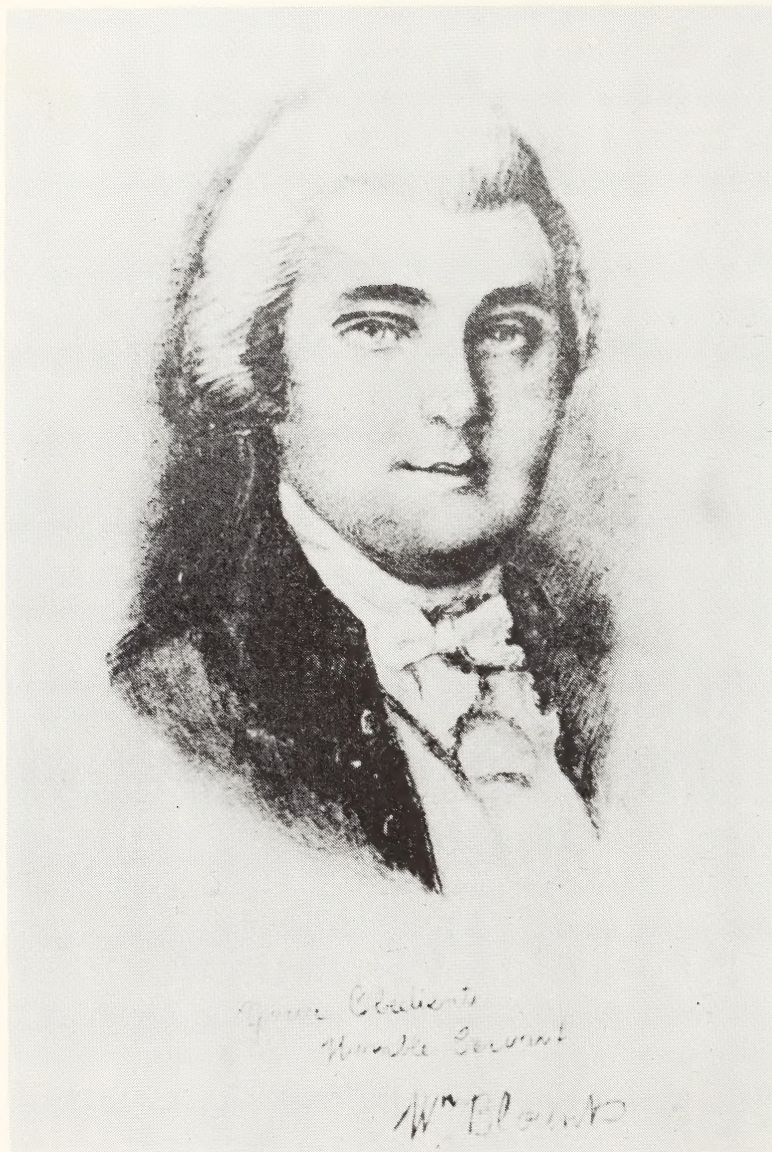
⁶² From the Hart Collection.

⁶³ By the Land Act of 1783, North Carolina had set aside 200,000 acres in the Tennessee Country for the satisfaction of claims of Richard Henderson and his associates (Transylvania Company). The division of the land among the associates had been made on paper, but the surveys had not yet been run. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 49-50.

⁶⁴ See Blount to John Salter, August 8, 1797, n.69, in this volume.

be some Mistake or misunderstanding between you & the Executor of Col Salter as to who by Contract is bound to pay the Tax and other expences prior to your executing a Title for I assure myself if Salters Representative [2] believed Salter's estate liable to pay them that he would have taken Measures for the Payment of them regularly as they occurred. I do not mean by this remark to disput the point with you, but on the contrary I assure you that if upon examination of the Contract or writings which passed between you and Col. Salter it shall appear that his estate is liable that such sums as you have advanced shall be repaid to you.—

I believe Salter's Heir or Representative is not a Minor consequently a Division can easily be made with him he can only demand an equitable division of such lots as have fallen to your share in Kentuckey and this State[,] due regard being paid to quality as well as quantity to which you can have no Objections.— I say regard must be paid to quality as well as quantity because so diversified is the soil and face of the Country in this quarter that a Choice of $\frac{1}{4}$ or perhaps $\frac{1}{8}$ say to include the best spots of Bottom and the Springs would be worth more than the Remainder. I shall by the first Conveyance that offers forward to J. G. Blount a Copy of your end of this Letter from whom you may expect to hear as early as the difficulty of Conveyance and the Distance between your Residence and his will permit and I entertain as strong Belief that the Representative of Salter either in person or by some other person by him orally authorized to agree on a division and receive a Title from you, will call upon you in the Course of the Summer or approaching Autumn. I know the Completion of this transaction has been much wished for by the Representative of Col. Salter & I cannot doubt but the earliest opportunity to effect it will be embraced.—Two of the Commissioners appointed to hold a Treaty with the Cherokees have arrived here Steel and Walton, and great Hope is entertained that some lands will be purchased and if any is I have no doubt but the whole of Henderson's Survey will be and some of the lots upon the North of Clinch are extremely good. Alfred Moore the third Com^r. is not arrived and his delay gives reason to believe he will not appear at the Treaty. Great has been the oppression of the Military *Power* upon the unhappy people who were found by the extension of the Line by Hawkins to be upon the lands claimed [3] by Indians and I believe nothing could have induced them to leave it as they have but the Prospect and



William Blount (1749-1800), oldest son of Jacob Blount and brother of John Gray and Thomas Blount. Photograph of portrait owned by Mrs. E. T. Knott, Washington, N. C., by Credle Studios, also of Washington.

Hope of Relief by the approaching Treaty.⁶⁵—It appears pretty certain the *President* will have a war with France which very few if any body here approves and on the other hand few or none fear its Consequences as it respects themselves or others on this Side the Mountain—This mountain once viewed as a great obstacle to the Settlement of this Country will prove a happy Line of Division between the eastern & western states and perhaps of *Empires* in less than 10'000. years. Accept my dear Sir my Thanks for your repeated Invitation to visit you and I beg to believe it would afford me great pleasure to comply with it but it is yet uncertain whether it will ever be convenient for me to do so—You no doubt have heard that M^{rs}. Blount in July last at Raleigh had the Misfortune to have her arm dreadfully Shattered by a Fall from a Carriage which as yet has delayed her arrival at this place but I now daily expect her with my little daughters—She will be happy in receiving your Complement—Be pleased to present me affectionately to M^{rs}. Hart & your family and believe me with sincere esteem

Your obedient Servant
W.^m. Blount

Col Thomas Hart

*William Blount to Colonel Thomas Hart*⁶⁶

Knoxville May 23^d. 1798.

In my letter of the 18th I omitted to ask you to inform me if any Taxes yet remained due to the State of Kentuckey upon Salter's part of the green River Tract, how much and what will be the latest Day on which it must be paid to save the land from sale and as I am speaking of that tract will you inform me of the Quality & Situation of your lots in that Tract and the estimated Value per acre—upon Recollection I believe the Executor of Salter is the Person not the heir who is authorized to make a Division with you and to sell it if he pleases to pay debts and the estate yet owes some heavy debts so that it is probable M^r. J G Blount would sell it if a good Price could be obtained in

⁶⁵ For the Hawkins line see William to John Gray Blount, November 7, 1797, n.106, in this volume. The treaty which resulted from the settlers' pressure was the Treaty of Tellico. Charles C. Royce, "Indian Land Cessions in the United States," *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899), 660.

⁶⁶ From the Hart Collection.

mony—I repeat that I have no doubt but the Representative of Salter will be with you in Fall or before authorized to make the Division you wish of both the green River & Clinch Tracts.—If you mean to have the Lines of Division run in the Clinch Tract as have advised and without such lines are run it cannot be disposed of except to some adven[2]tageous specutor, the sooner you order it the better, I say the sooner the better because your agent being a Sheriff and six Courts to attend in which there is much Business he can only do it when he has leisure from his official Business and if done at all it ought to be in the Course of this Spring or Summer, he is an economical Man so that you have not to fear the Imposition of any unnecessary expence and he is fully able to make to you a written Report after the Survey of the quality of the Soil, face of the Country & c & c I should suppose such a Survey and Report ought also to be made of your Lots in the green River Tract and then I should suppose it would be easy to make a Division between yourself and persons to whom you have made Sales of parts therefore I am & c

W.^m. Blount

Col. Thomas Hart

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Dear Sir,

Phil^a. 24th. May '98

Your favor of the 11th Inst has afforded me great pleasure, because it proves that you was in good humour at the time of writing it & gives me reason to hope that ere this you have found some relief from the safe return of the Grampus—I believe that the account brought by Cap^t. Hudgins is true but still it does not obtain much credit here & perhaps it would not be safe to rely on it so far as to send a Vessel to Sea on the faith of it. however you will see in the enclosed paper, which I send you for that reason, an Extract from the Register of the deliberations of the Executive Directory at St Domingo, which gives additional encouragement sufficient in my opinion to justify you in Sending the Tuley there if it was certain that we would not declare War—but there's the Rub—The Senate *have passed* & I am convinced that the H^o of Rep^s. *will pass* a Bill authorizing the President “to instruct & direct the Commanders of the armed Vessels belonging to the U. States to seize, take & bring into our ports, to

be proceeded against according to the Laws of Nations, any armed Vessel fitted out at any Port belonging to the French Republic, or elsewhere, being Commissioned by the French Government & which shall be found hovering on the Coast of the United States"—and this measure must so certainly & so soon produce War, even if our [2] Commissioners should have made peace which is not quite so improbable as it some time ago appeared to be, that I think it deserves to be considered as Tantamount to a Declaration of War—In fact the arguments by which this Bill has been supported proved that our Government is determined to go to war at all Events, & I am so thoroughly convinced that the determination will be perserved in, even if Letters should be rec^d. from our Commissioners informing that they had concluded a Treaty, that I cannot help advising you—to accommodate all your arrangements to that state of Things—If you had heard & seen what I have, you would not think it strange that I entertain this opinion, & yet with your ideas of the advantages of peace & of the patriotism of the two majorities, you will hardly think it possible that it can be well founded—I am not as well informed as I intend to be of the value of Juniper Shingles & the probability of their rising or falling, but as far as my information goes it authorizes me to believe that they will always be an object highly worthy of your attention—War, as it will retard building will doubtless lessen their value but they will always be worth getting in peace or War—Doctor Hall thinks he could make a Contract for all you can make in a number of years at a good price—but he has formed an opinion—still more extravagant. He has been told by Tatnall⁶⁷ of Georgia, & others that what we call Juniper is in reality the red Cedar, & relying on the correctness of this information he calculates that he can make an immense fortune by selling his & your Land to Government for the sake of the Timber to be used in building Ships of War[.]now let me ask you what is the difference between Juniper & red Cedar? and whether Juniper has ever been used in ship building? The answers to [3] these questions are intended for the Doctor, who will not be convinced of his error by any thing else, & should I leave this, as probably I shall, before they can reach Here, you will please address them to him. My hopes of getting you James's Receipt & 2000 Dol^{rs}. in money have been kept alive by daily repeated promises which seemed to

⁶⁷ Josiah Tattnall (1764-1803), native of Georgia and a Revolutionary soldier; State Representative in 1795 and 1796; United States Senator, 1796-1799; and Governor of Georgia, 1801-1802. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1690.

claim my confidence, until this Evening when finding myself disappointed, they expired—But the promises are still repeated & if, contrary to my expectation, they should yield any thing, I shall lose no time in conveying it to you—

It affords me great pleasure to hear that my interest is encreasing, not so much because I wish to be re-elected, as because I wish to have my conduct & Character well understood—I will however confess that since my Character has been so basely attacked I do wish to be re-elected as a reelection will make the refutation of the Calumny as public as the Calumny [—————]* pray make haste to inform me w[hen?]* & how a Report so false & scandalous has originated for until I get that information & inflict a suitable punishment on the Infamous author, if any suitable there be, I shall not enjoy one moments' quiet. You will see the foreign news, Congressional proceedings &c. in the papers I send to M^cDaniel for public Inspection. Jackey is well & joins me in Comp^{ts}. to Polly & family — When Congress will rise is yet uncertain — nothing has been said on the subject that could lead to an opinion, but I hope to get home by the 20th June—I am,

as usual

Yours &c

Tho. Blount

Addressed: M^r John G. Blount
Washington,
N^o. Carolina.

Thomas Harvey Blount to John Gray Blount

Honoured Papa,

Chappel Hill June 4rd [sic] 1798

I am very glad to hear by your letter of 29th May that you were all well once more again — I received the cloathes likewise with the letter and am very much obliged to you for them — I am very sorry to inform you M^r. Easton has gone to Knoxville for some time past and therefore I expect not to get the money as he has deceived M^r. Brag and Myself likewise one[ce] and it is very likely that he will deceive both you and us again; however the time grows short when I shall have to pay the money

* Writing obliterated.

to the Stewart [Steward of the University] and others and I hope I shall not be put off as I was last year by him if I am I do not know what I shall do. You cannot accuse me with justness of not writing to you; even if you do not receive them for I have sent ten to you where I have received one from you for I take every opportunity to write to you. I wish you would inform me as soon as possible where I am to get money from to pay the Stewart and others for if it is from Mr. Easton please write to his Clerk concerning it that he may be [2] ready to pay it whenever I shall call on him or if from any other place please order it here on the 4th day of July as that is the day on which we end this Session or if you cannot, as soon as possible — I am very sorry to hear that Uncle Reading is sick and more so because that prevented you from coming here for we are both⁶⁸ very anxious to see some one from home.

I expect Aunt Blount⁶⁹ through this on her way to Knoxville on the eight of this month. I hope the following will give you some pleasure as it does myself viz — that I have selected 200 lines out of the Presidents speech before his resignation⁷⁰ to translate into French to show to the Trustees at July and a copy of which I will either send or bring myself in November and show you that you have not spent your money uselessly on one of your sons and I am in hopes that the rest may say the same to you hereafter, as John goes on very well at present in the business — No more at present only present my respects to the family — and remain your

ever Dutiful Son

P. S. I expect that

Thomas Harvey Blount

Major James Grant⁷¹

will shortly pay a visit to you

T. H. Blount

Addressed: John Gray Blount esquire

Washington

North-Carolina

per favour

Col. Murfrey.

⁶⁸ Both John G. Blount, Jr. and Thomas Harvey Blount attended the University of North Carolina. Joseph Caldwell to Blount, April 28, 1799, in this volume; R. D. W. Connor (comp.), *A Documentary History of the University of North Carolina, 1776-1779*, edited with a preface by Louis R. Wilson and Hugh T. Lefler (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2 volumes, 1953), II, 327, 498-499, hereinafter cited as Connor, *Documentary History*; John Strother to Blount, December 29, 1798, in this volume.

⁶⁹ Mrs. William Blount.

⁷⁰ Washington's Farewell Address, September 17, 1796.

⁷¹ James Grant, commonly called "Major," was a lawyer and follower of William Blount. He was involved as a courier in the Blount conspiracy. Masterson, *William Blount*, 312-322.

David Allison to Richard Blackledge[Philadelphia] June 7th. 1798

Dear Sir.

I received you several letters of May with the Certificates for the Pay^t of Taxes in the Counties of Jones and Onslow and the deposit made for those of Carteret

In your letter of the 18th you inform me of the sale of the lands in Craven by W^m. Henry in an illegal manner[.] To pursue regular measures against those men it is necessary that I should have a Copy of the Advertisement its date & by what officer sold — the date of the Sheriffs conveyance, the time you met him on the road and he was satisfied with the sale[;] whether he then informed you that it was previously conveyed or at what time he did inform & whether at your meeting on the road he gave you any intimation of a prior sale — whether it was advertised and sold at any prior date than on the 2nd Dec^r. [.] and be certain where the Sheriff was on the day of the date of the Deed and who are the Witnesses and where they live which will in some degree give certainty [2] as to the place and perhaps some knowledge of the Fraud[.] please give me this information by an early date & I will take the necessary measures to bring them to a proper sense of their Conduct — Tender the Taxes before Witness under your purchase if you have not done so already.

In that of the 23^d. you warn me as to the Taxes which if paid for the present year might be warded off again by sales of some part thereof[.] this is perhaps true that such sales might be made but in the Interim where is money to be had for the Taxes — my situation⁷² has nearly prevented every kind of Arrangement and be assured much address is necessary to raise money here now— for the amount of these Taxes you refer me to my land list, I can only know from that the lands in the low Counties. I know nothing of the quantity I am to pay for in Buncombe[.] If you can inform me that part I shall then be able to calculate fully and altho the sum required is I expect very large yet I intend to use endeavours to effect it[.] and to shew you that I am in earnest I have called together such as I have secured on lands and made it a common Cause and already [3] I am promised a sum sufficient for about 400^m Acres from two

⁷² Allison was still in jail for debt.

men[;] and by such means only do I expect to succeed for if all the lands you have heretofore mentioned in the name of J G Blount in Buncombe and elsewhere are a part and really to be paid for they will demand at least 6000 Dols— when you say 2 40/100 for every thousand do you mean hard Cash or paper & how is the Exchange

I have been exerting all my knowledge and abilities to devise a mode by which to discharge the debt due by you and J G. Blount to Evans and altho I have [no]t * yet succeeded I have hopes so to do which will give me great pleasure and satisfaction

You complain of my neglect in not writing it is true I have neglected but my situation here has been such as left me no wish to write as I was frequently without cash to pay the postage of letters

I am respectfully
Your Obed^t Servant
David Allison

Addressed: Richard Blackledge Esq^r.
Washington
N^o. Carolina

John Gray Blount to Colonel Thomas Hart

Washington June 15th. 1798.

Col^o. Thomas Hart
D^r Sir⁷³

When Mr. Purviance was in North Carolina about the division of the Green River Land I was sick and unable to attend that business and young M^r Salter the Son of our old Friend Col^o. Robert Salter did not procure from him such information as to enable the Executors of Col^o. Salter to know the exact Sum claimed by you from them for their part of the charges on the Land; The Executors have now appointed my Brother Willie Blount their attorney to get the matter settled and to obtain from you titles agreeably to your Bond which we have sent him and also a Copy of the Will of Salter⁷⁴ that the Deeds may be

* Manuscript torn.

⁷³ From the Hart Collection.

⁷⁴ See Blount to John Salter, August 8, 1797, n.69, in this volume.

taken conformably thereto.

Should our approbation to any further division be necessary we will signify the same or first take a Deed for our undivided fourth of the eighth directed to you and then join in any measures which may be necessary to effect a division of that undivided part.

I think [2] you were once so obliging as to promise to endeavour to obtain from W^m. B. Smith compensation for my Land which he sold on Brashearses[?] * Creek. If you have ever been able to obtain from him any thing please inform my Brother Willie who is now my Attorney. I am told Smith is now in Cash and it will be a good time for me to have application made to him if he has not already settled it.

With my best wishes that this may find you and Family enjoying perfect happiness

I am with much respect

Your most Obed^t.

J. G. Blount

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Dear Sir,

Phil^a. 21 June 1798

I was exceedingly mortified that I did not receive a Letter from you by the last mail as it was a day of great expectation with [m]e† & my mortification was the greater because I could not help being fearful that your neglect to write might have been occasioned by some fatal accident to our poor sick brother⁷⁵ whose situation was the subject of a part of your last — however I am not much in the habit of anticipating misfortunes & I will hope that your silence was the effect of some less disagreeable cause. I have not yet the power of transmitting to you, or of telling you that I have effectual[ly] secured the article you have so long & much wanted — nor am I able to announce that your friend's friend Mr [John] Evans⁷⁶ is satisfied — but I have the pleasure to inform you that the prospect of accomplishing both

* Almost illegible.

† Letter obliterated.

⁷⁵ Most likely William, but possibly Reading, Blount. Thomas to John Gray Blount, March 29, 1798; and Thomas Harvey Blount to John Gray Blount, June 4, 1798, in this volume.

⁷⁶ Sarcastic reference to Evans, who, through Allison (the friend) held a bill payable by John Gray Blount. Blount to David Allison, August 2, 1796; and Thomas to John Gray Blount, May 3, 1798, in this volume.

has brightened considerably, & is still brightening fast. Mr A[llison]. yesterday rec^d. information from N. York which induced him to write me the enclosed Note, & in a conversation with me this morning he assured me that he had the most sanguine expectation of getting, by the arrangement he there alluded to, goods, money, & good notes at short sight to amount of between 80 & 90.000 \$ — How his expectation will turn out I will not undertake to say but I confess I have more than usual confidence in it, because he has shewn me that it rests at least on probability. You will see by my Letter to McDaniel that I have determined [2] to write an address to the people containing an unequivocal Declaration that I am a Candidate at the next Election, & a statement of facts to shew that the charge contained in the Report ⁷⁷ now circulating to my prejudice is untrue — the facts will be in substance precisely what I stated to General [William R.] Davie — Mr Barnes will send the Letters for Beaufort County, say 50 or 100, to you, & I must request you to direct them to the proper persons who are better known to you than to myself — I hope my friends, if I have any, will use activity to preserve my Interest for since I find myself constrained to be a Candidate contrary to the desire of my Heart which has long panted, & still pants, for retirement & domestic ease, I feel anxious to be elected; because the rejection of my services would imply a censure on my conduct which would at all times be extremely painful, but at the present time uncommonly so, as during this whole Session, in which have been decided many of the most important Constitutional questions that ever did or can arise, I have been in the minority, & for being there, tho I was there in obedience to the purest dictates of my Conscience, have shared with others who voted with me in all that illiberal abuse which has been so copiously dealt out by the majority upon all persons, whether members or private Citizens, who have been found less ready than themselves to sacrifice the Constitution of their Country at the shrine of Executive omnipotency & infallibility. yet, anxious as I am, I do not mean to supplicate[,] for the Representative who honestly does his duty, & that is my own case, confers as great an obligation as he receives — & until the people know [3] and admit this Truth their Liberties & the Constitution of their Country will always be in danger; because they will always be entrusted to men who will prove themselves unworthy of the Trust by the base & sycophantic means they

⁷⁷ See Election Circular [n.d.], in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

will use to obtain it — Since writing my public Letters I have seen a Letter to the President from Mr. [Elbridge] Gerry, brought by Mr. [John] Marshall,⁷⁸ which renders my hope of an accommodation through him less than it was before — indeed I am of opinion now that no hope of an accommodation can reasonably be entertained; because Mr. Gerry seems to have determined that he will not treat Singly & the President has today said in positive terms that he will never send another Minister to France until he is officially informed that he will be rec^d. & treated with [respect.]* [The President's]* message, containing this assert[ion and]* Gerry's —————* communications was rec^d. to-day & [ordered]* to be printed — I will send it to you in my next. no time is yet fixed on for our adjournment & nobody expects it will happen before the middle of July — it is by some expected that we shall make a declaration of War before we rise & I am myself of opinion that such a measure would be pleasing to a great part of both Houses & to the President, but I do not think it will be adopted — we shall however do a worse thing — we shall transfer to the president all our Constitutional powers & take to ourselves powers which the Constitution never gave nor intended to give us — Jackey is, like myself, well & joins me in Compl^{ts}. to you & your family

I am as usual

Y^{rs}. Tho. Blount

Addressed: John G Blount Esq^r.

Washington

N^o. Carolina

Jacob Blount to Susannah Harvey

Edenton June 26th. 1798

Dear Sukey,

I got safe home the day I left Washington though very unwell all day, but I have perfectly recovered and am now quite well, On my arrival home found that Mr. Collins had procured the Cargo for the Schooner we had agreed she should take out

⁷⁸ After the failure of the mission to France, Gerry, believing he could retrieve the situation, remained in France. Pinckney also remained in Europe, and Marshall returned home. McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, II, 404-408.

* Manuscript torn.

previous to my leaving home, which made it absolutely necessary I should go in her, it being too valuable to be sacrafised by such Cap^{ts}. as we can get at this place, and I consider the risque of being taken⁷⁹ very trifling and a great prospect of Clearing four or five thousand Dollars in about Six weeks or say seven at most at the expiration of which time hope to have the inexpressable pleasure of seeing you in good health, should I be so unfortunate as to be taken, hope I shall not be detained[;] taken or not no time shall be Spent Idelly to prevent me from seeing you as soon as possible, when I hope we shall Indeavour to make each other as happy as this world will afford,⁸⁰ but should I be so unfortunate as to be detained, hope you will not despair of my returning for you may rest assured that the thoughts of you will inable me to surmount every difficulty that may arrise, I expet to sail on sunday next and if I should go no [2] farther than Cape Nichola Mole shall probably be back by the 10th of August if to Jamacia about the last of August, if a good opportunity offers from the Bar will write you on my geting down but that will depend upon the opportunity,

I am Dear Sukey your
Affectionate Lover
Jacob Blount

Addressed: M^{rs} Susanah Harvey
Washington

Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount

NewBern 26th June 1798

Dear Sir,

Since I wrote to you by post my mind has dwelt much on the subject of my letter to you, and the more I have thought of it, the worse I should think of myself were I at the present moment to remain silent and let M^r. [Thomas] Badger by my negligence & indifference get into Congress, when perhaps a large majority of the electors would not wish to send him if they could s[end someone?]* else—I however think it my duty to offer my services

⁷⁹ By a British or French warship.

⁸⁰ Jacob married Susannah Harvey in 1799 or 1800. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxviii; Jacob to John Gray Blount, January 14, 1800, in this volume.

* Manuscript torn.

and trust the rest to fate. were I even certain of failing, which is by no means the case, I would rather do what my feelings tell me is right than by remaining silent subject myself to the censure of others as well as the reproach of my own conscience in future. I have therefore come to a determination to publish my willingness to serve the people should they elect me.

As Mr. Badger has taken great pains to secure the people particularly of the 4 upper counties to his interest I shall esteem it a favor if you think you can render me any services that way if you would do it. I do suppose that at any rate I shall have the greater part of Nathan Bryans Friends on my side, and I hope some of those that were mine against him at the last election altho' they may have promised to support Badger agt. Bryan.

As Capt. Jn°. Alderson wrote to me some time ago on the subject I thought it but right to write to him & inform him that I would publish my willingness to serve[.] I will thank you to forward the letter to him as soon as possible, & to render me such other services in Hyde [County] as are in your power — the Governor has ordered the election for one in the room of Bryan to be held on the Second Thursday & Friday in July, & the retu[rn] of the poll to [2] be made to Trenton on the Thursday & friday following.

I shall write to Jack Wallace at the Castle by the first opportunity, but perhaps you will have one before me — the elections are to be held on the same days in every election district in the respective Counties, which may occasion some of the electors at the Seperate elections to lose their Votes unless they should be cautioned about it, and get the sheriff or his deputies to hold those elections [I s]hall* get my advertisements struck off as soon as I can & lose no time in circulating them through the different counties. With Esteem

I remain your friend.

Rich^d: D. Spaight

John G. Blount Esqr.

Addressed: [John Gra]y* Blount

Washington

* Manuscript torn.

*Joseph Tagert to Charles Roach*⁸¹ [Copy]

Dear Sir,

Newbern 27th June 1798

Nothing but the ill treatment my friend Mr. Badger has rec^d. from Mr. Spaight with regard to the Congress election could have induced me to write you on the subject of Politics.

Contrary to the expectation of almost every one, & contrary to the most solemn promises & assurances, Mr. Spaight has offered for Congress in Opposition to Mr. Badger, who has taken so much pains, & who has, instead of denouncing such treatment from him uniformly behaved to Mr. Spaight with Candor and friendship, and before he offered, did propose to Mr. S. to support him in case he would offer, but Mr. S. then declined and has still held the same language ever since until yesterday.

How Mr. S. & his friends can reconcile such conduct to themselves I must leave them to account, but I know your love of truth & independence, and therefore give you this information so that you may be on your guard against the insinuations of the party—

Tho' I have as much property at risk in this country, as any one of Mr. Spaights friends, I am willing to risk it in the care of Mr. Badger at Congress, Indeed much rather than to a man who has uniformly loved any other government better than that of his own Country.

I am Dr. Sir

your Ob^t. Serv^t.

Joseph Tagert

Mr. Charles Roach
Piney Grove

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Phil^a. 28th. June 1798

Dear Sir,

I have rec^d. your Letter of the 15th Inst. & with the contents of it am satisfied. On Monday last I forwarded to Mr. Barnes my address to the people declaring myself a Candidate at the next Election & stating such facts as must convince all who are open

⁸¹ Roach was a planter and regimental militia captain who lived near William Blount's old home at Piney Grove. Clark, *State Records*, XVII, 244, XVIII, 763; Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 87; "Census 1790," in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 133. Tagert is unidentified.

to conviction that be the Report of the Commissioners what it may I cannot be implicated in any of the frauds that have been committed on the Land office,⁸² but fortunately I was not driven to the necessity of resting my defence on those facts only — on Saturday last I rec^d. a Letter from Ed. Jones, the Solicitor, in answer to mine of the 17th Ult^o which contains a complete refutation of the charge & I have sent it to Mr. Barnes to be printed with my address which I presume you will see by the time this reaches you as I have requested Mr. Barnes to have it printed & circulated immediately at my Expense — 50, or 100 Copies of it will be sent to you, & I must request you to have them directed & presented to such persons as you may think proper. I also wish you to attend as much as you conveniently can to the proper distribution of such as may be sent to Martin & Pitt — My Correspondents in those two Counties are Thomas Hunter⁸³ & Grove Wright⁸⁴ who I presume are well disposed to promote my Interest, but I don't *know* that they are — I have however directed the addresses to be sent to them. In the news papers which I herewith send to M^c Daniel you will see the last Message from the President on French affairs — some very extraordinary Debates which took place the other day in the Senate, & a copy of a still more extraordinary Bill⁸⁵ now before the Senate, where it seems to have more friends that it ought to have in the world — indeed I fear it will have too many friends in the H^o. of Rep^s. yet I cannot suppose that it will have enough to support it in it's present hideous form, for if in this form [2] it should pass into a Law, the people of the United States will be less free than the wretched Slaves of Ireland — this will shew you how fruitless it was only ten years ago to dispute so much about the form of a Constitution. Our good friends the British finding when they were about to evacuate Port au Prince that there were 4, or, 5000 Frenchmen, some white & some black, attached to their cause whose safety & preservation they could not otherwise provide for, have sent them to us — & you see by the Presidents message of yesterday & by Tousard's Letter of this morning

⁸² For the reaction of the Blounts' enemies to this address see "Election Circular [n.d.], in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

⁸³ Thomas Hunter had been active in Martin County politics since before 1776, when he served in the convention that wrote the State Constitution of that year. Wheeler, *Sketches*, I, 85.

⁸⁴ Grove Wright, a Greenville merchant. Wright to Blount, July 22, 1799, in this volume.

⁸⁵ The notorious Sedition Act. McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, II, 389 ff.

where a part of them are, & how they are acting⁸⁶ — I suppose other Cargoes of them (for it is here positively asserted that thirty american vessels were by constraint loaded with them) will attempt, if they have not already attempted, to get into Virg^a., the Carolinas, & Georgia — where, as they all have arms in their hands, they would presently begin to cut our throats — indeed I suspect they were sent to our shore for that very purpose by direction of Mr. Liston,⁸⁷ who, although he is regarded & trusted as a friend, is in my opinion as much our enemy as Talleyrand — I give you this information which is so alarming to all the States & particularly to ours to the end that you may be prepared to prevent any of these infernal British Frenchmen whether black or white from landing among you — I think the Governor who has been written to from here this day ought to take effectual & immediate measures to prevent their landing in any part of the State — it is certain they will not be permitted to Land here — But Congress have not yet determined what they can or ought to do with them — My own opinion is that we ought to send them by the authority of our State Governments to Nova Scotia or some other British place.

I wrote you in my last that D[avid]. A[llison]. expected great relief from arrangements making for him at New York & he still entertains a Belief that his expectation will be realised but I have not yet been able to procure from him either Cash, or a Receipt from Evans — I however visit him [3] every day & shall continue to do so, until I push the money out of him, provided it ever gets into him, or until the adjournment which may happen on the 9th July, or may not happen until the 4th March — I say it may happen on the 9th July because the H^o. of Rep^s. have passed a Res^o. authorizing it on that day, but the Senate will not decide upon it until Tuesday next & then it is probable they will decide against it —

Your Bond to Cruger has not yet been found, but I have obtained from Mr Hazlehurst a Certificate that Allison took it up on the 18th Feb^y. 1796 by the payment of £8559.17.6 in

⁸⁶ When in April, 1798, the British were forced by disease and guerilla warfare led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, to evacuate Port au-Prince and other towns, refugees fled to the United States in British transports. The arrival of these ships loaded with slaves and whites caused great alarm, and upon the recommendation of Major Tousard at Fort Mifflin, following a report of mutiny there, Governor Thomas Mifflin urged President Adams to secure legislation prohibiting the refugees from landing. Adams sent the papers to Congress, which decided to take no action. Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 566; *Annals of Congress*, Fifth Congress, Second Session, 1797-1799, II, 2057, 2067.

⁸⁷ Sir Robert Liston (1742-1836), from 1796 to 1801 the British Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States. Leslie Stephen, Sidney Lee, and Others (eds.), *The Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Oxford University Press, 28 volumes, 1922-1959), XI, 1235-1236, hereinafter cited as *Dictionary of National Biography*.

R[obert]. Morris' Notes payable at 27 months to Henry Cruger; & therefore I think you are safe if it should never be found. The Senate have passed a Bill annulling our Treaties with France which will doubtless pass the other Branches — for we are determined [to?]* have War, although it is not improbable to my [mind? tha]t Gerry has made or will make a Treaty, [&?] I expect that we shall before the end of the Session declare it. We have given the President a power to borrow money without limiting the amount or the rate of Interest & I shall not be surprised if he borrows & spends 8 or 10,000 ,000[.] the 80,000 Militia, the provisional army of 10,000 & his Volunteers will enable him to do the latter with great ease provided he can do the former,—Jackey, who is well, joins me in Comp^{ts}. to you Polly, Reading, Lucy & c. & c.

I am
as usual
Yours
Tho. Blount

Addressed: John G. Blount, Esq^r.
Washington
N^o. Carolina—

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

Phil^a. 5th July 1798

Dear Sir,

I was at 3 o'Clock this morning violently attacked by a Cholera Morbus which has left me at a very late hour of the Evening so weak that I am scarcely able to sit up — you must therefore excuse me as well for not giving you a long Letter as for not entering at all into the Subject of your Business with D. A. whose prospects as far as I know (for I have not seen him for 2 Days) are neither better nor worse than when I last wrote you— then his hope appeared to be strong & favorable.

Blackledge wrote me by the last mail that my Enemies in Beaufort & Pitt[,] finding that the Calumny respecting frauds on the Land Office was detected & exposed by Edward Jones &

* Manuscript torn.

Edward Graham,⁸⁸ who have behaved very much like Gentlemen, had resorted to the old Story about W^m. Blount & were endeavoring to inculcate a Belief by low & insidious whispers that I was implicated in the charge for which he was impeached—upon receiving this information I requested the Committee who had investigated that subject to Certify whether they had or had not found any reason to suspect me, & they unanimously answered that they were so perfectly convinced that I ought not to be suspected of having any concern in, or any knowledge of the affair, that they would deem it but justice to me to sign any instrument that I could write on the the subject & give me leave to publish it—upon which, declining to write any thing myself, I requested [2] them, or any one of them, to write what should appear to them proper — and M^r Harper & M^r Sitgreaves,⁸⁹ who are rather my Enemies than my friends wrote the Certificate of which the enclosed is a Copy — By the next mail I shall send into the district 2 or 3 hundred copies of it printed & attested by [Nathaniel] Macon & [William B.] Grove — in the meantime you may use this Copy in any way you please. We expect that an adjournment will take place in the course of next week but it is by no means certain for the Senate have further postponed the Resolution of the H^o. of Rep^s. on that subject until Saturday next, & how they will then decide is doubtful. It is understood that an attempt to declare War against France will be made before we rise & I confess I am fearful it will be carried — we have to day passed a Resolution directing the immediate raising of 12 more Reg^{ts}. of Infantry & Six Companies of Horse — I am obliged to go to bed — adieu — Jackey is well & sends Comp^{ts}.

Yours as usual

Tho. Blount

In consequence of the death of M^r Bryan⁹⁰ it became my duty to recommend a Commissioner of the direct Tax for Newbern

⁸⁸ Edward Jones was Solicitor General, and Edward Graham was a member of the House of Commons from New Bern in 1797. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 101; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 122. For Jones's part in the Blount defense see Election Circular [n.d.], in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

⁸⁹ Robert Goodloe Harper of South Carolina and Samuel Sitgreaves of Pennsylvania were Federalist members of the House investigating committee in the William Blount impeachment. James A. Bayard, John Dawson, and Abraham Baldwin, also signers of the enclosed affidavit, were respectively a Delaware Federalist and Virginia and Connecticut Democrats. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 527, 789, 1010, 1607; *Dictionary of American Biography*, I, 530-532.

⁹⁰ Nathan Bryan was a Representative in Congress from the New Bern district from 1795 until he died in Philadelphia in June, 1798. His death, which resulted in Spaight's return to Congress, also gave Thomas Blount the right to nominate the new tax commissioner from that district. Spaight to Blount, June 26, October 18, 1798, in this volume; *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 617, 1633.

District, & I have this day recommended Spyres Singleton⁹¹ — will he do? My situation was a delicate one & feeling that I ought to name a man near the Centre of the district, I concluded after much hesitation that I could not do better —

free, Tho. Blount

Addressed:

John Gray Blount, esq^r.

Washington

N^o. Carolina —

[*enclosure*]

Philadelphia 5 July 1798

It having been intimated to us that Reports have been circulated in some parts of the Country, tending to establish an opinion that the Honorable Thomas Blount, one of the Members of the House of Representatives of the United States from the State of North Carolina, was implicated in the affair of William Blount, a Senator of the United States, impeached of High crimes and Misdemeanors; We, the members of the Committee appointed to enquire into that affair, do certify that, in the Course of the Examinations made by us, or under our authority, relative to that affair, there appeared no Evidence or circumstance from which there arose, in our Minds, the smallest suspicion of his having any concern in, or any knowledge of the plans or designs of the said William Blount in the affair for which He has been impeached, or any thing relative to it.

(Signed)

We certify that the
above Certificate is a true Copy
of an original now in the possession
of Thomas Blount therein named —
William C. C. Claiborne.
Nath^l. Macon

S Sitgreaves
Abr[aham] Baldwin
J Dawson
Rob: G. Harper
James A. Bayard.

⁹¹ An active lawyer, politician, and office holder of New Bern. Clark, *State Records*, XXX, 73; Singleton to Blount, February 27, 1800, in this volume.

*Thomas Blount to John Haywood*Phil^a. 8th July 1798Dear Sir,⁹²

I rec^d. your two Letters by Mr Porter some days ago, but have not now time to express the obligation they laid me under—The Bill was paid at sight, & the Piano, the Watch & the Chain are purchased—The former, which cost 180 Dollars & is said by Mr Reinagle to be an excellent Instrument, will be shipped to morrow on board the Schooner Polly & Nancy, Cap^t. Mackey for Newbern addressed to Doctor Guion⁹³—The two latter I shall bring with me—They are said by good Judges (you may be sure I mean Ladies) to be elegant & should M^{rs}. Haywood & you think them so, they will not fail to please; for they cost together, although they are both Gold, only 117 Dollars so that I have yet 78 Dollars to lay out in Ear Rings, trinkets &c. which shall be laid out to-morrow—for it is expected that Congress will adjourn in a few days & therefore we are making all possible haste to prepare for a start homeward—I have to-day dispatched 2 or 300 Certificates like the enclosed & when they get well into circulation I shall have refuted all the Calumnies that have been raised against me—Jones' Letters in respect to the Land Business you will have seen before this reaches you—Accept & present to M^{rs}. H. the joint Comp.^{ts} of M^{rs}. B. — &

your friend
Tho. Blount

Addressed: John Haywood, Esq^r.
Raleigh,
N^o. Carolina

free Tho. Blount

⁹² From the Haywood Collection.

⁹³ Isaac Guion (d. 1803) was a Revolutionary soldier and New Bern politician. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 12, 274; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, June 6, 1803.

*Henry J. Neill to John Gray Blount*Washington July 16th 1798

Sir

Your Mother in law⁹⁴ & myself are on our return to the Northward and have call'd to get some information of her business, your absence from Home leaves us in the same situation as when we saw you last—Mr. Blackledge promis'd to have paid into your [h]*ands the amo^t of his Note 47[7]. doll^s with interest to be ready on our return, We shall set of tomorrow morning for Edenton where we shall make a stay of Several days, if you will be so kind to let us know the state of Her business, and respecting what Mr. Sharp Blount has done &c, Mrs. Neill requests you to use your Endeavors to secure Jo^s Palmers Money and with respect to some back sallery she leaves it to your self to have it settled Consista[nt] with your own feelings Mrs Neill Joins me in respect & friendship

Y^{rs}

Henry Neill

Addressed: Mr. John Blount Merct.
Whashington

*Edward Harris to John Gray Blount*Knoxville July 16th 1798

Dear Sir

I arrived at this place after a disagreeable and tedious journey on thursday last and shall set out with Willie Blount this evening for Nashville

Gen^l. [James] Robison [Robertson] who has been attending the treaty⁹⁵ as an agent on the part of this State returned to this place last evening and will go on to Cumberland in a few days, where your business with him committed to Willie Blount will be

⁹⁴ The reference is puzzling. It is possible that Neill meant to say "stepmother," and that the reference is to Mary Adams Blount, the third wife of Jacob Blount, Sr., who could have married Neill after Jacob's death. Thomas to John Gray Blount, October 13, 1799, in this volume. However, Neill may refer here to Mrs. Miles Harvey, mother of Mrs. John Gray Blount, who may have married Neill after Harvey's death. Anne Harvey to Mrs. John Gray Blount, May 11, 1800, in this volume.

* Manuscript torn.

⁹⁵ Treaty of Tellico meeting. Royce, "Cherokee Nation," 179-180.

settled and Willie or myself will go to Kentucky to settle with [John] Smith and Col [Thomas] Hart⁹⁶

Gen^l Robison informs me that money is exceedingly scarce in Cumberland and he thinks the price of land has not risen any for a year past. You will see from this my prospect of selling is but dull, but if possible the sums wanted, shall be raised

The treaty for the present is broken up without any thing having been done; but to commence again after fifty two days. The Indians have as yet positively refused to sell any land. Some think they may be induced to sell *some* at the next meeting, and all seems to think if they refuse a war will be the consequence

I called on Col. [David] Vance and got your war[2]rants but he could not give me any information respecting the amount of taxes, there having been no return of the lands into his office. He told me it was the prevailing opinion in that county that Mr. Strother having purchased after the first of April the lands in his hands were not liable for that years tax[.] I was not aware of this circumstance in the sale until mentioned by Col Vance, and I apprehend if you will examine the Acts of Assembly you will find this opinion to be correct. A Mr. Devaul of Virginia had some lands in Craven and in like circumstances and on its being referred by him and the Sheriff to Mr Thomas[?] Badger he gave it as his [opinion?]* that the lands were not liable

I am in hopes that with the assistance of Willie Blount I shall be able to discharge the most material of my business so as to return by the time I intended

I am

Dear Sir

Yours Sincerely

E. . Harris

Addressed: Raleigh 6th Aug^t. 98.

John G Blount Esquire

Washington

Hon^d by
Mr Easton

}

⁹⁶ The Henderson Company land claims. See William Blount to Thomas Hart, May 23, 1789; and John Gray Blount to Thomas Hart, June 15, 1798, in this volume. John Smith was a financially interested party.

* Manuscript torn.

David Allison to [John Gray Blount]

Philadelphia July 16, 1798

D^r Sir

Herewith I send you a list of lands in N^o. Carolina stating the N^o. of the Grants & Acres and the county in which they lie as far as I can collect them I have been thus particular that you may be able to pursue directions which I fear I shall be compelled to give, that is to have all sold this Season for the Taxes even altho I expect this Week to forward you money sufficient to make the payments.

Necessity has compelled me to bind this property in too many Instances with a hope to preserve every thing by those arrangements until a Sale could be made and for this purpose I have submitted to close confinement for twelve months during which time I have in no instance failed to pursue with attention every apparent mode for completing this object and releasing my friends from difficulty and myself from confinement[.] in both these objects I have so far failed, I have begged a letter of license⁹⁷ this has been refused unless I would make an unconditional surrender of my property[.] this I could not nor would not if thereby I could obtain a Seat in paradise unless my friends were released and that cant be obtained any other way than thro an actual payment of the debt and this cant be done by making a surrender, having thus far been refused terms it becomes my duty to force them with the means in my power, therefore I ordain and decree that all my lands in N^o. Carolina be sold for Taxes at this present[.] that my friend John Strother be furnished by you with the Cash which shall be forwarded you to make payment and become the purchaser which will at once destroy my title and defeat my enemies.⁹⁸ Thus far being done I wish him here that I may sell to him all my property elsewhere and immediately take the benefit of the Act of Insolvency thereby I shall continue possessed of the means of doing Justice to my friends releasing my person from confinement and forcing my

⁹⁷ A letter by which a creditor extends further time to a debtor to pay his debts. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 1049.

⁹⁸ An example of these sales is found in Buncombe County, where lands registered in the names of David Allison and John Gray Blount, totaling 570,880 acres, were sold by the sheriff for taxes in September, 1798. These were bought by John Strother, agent of the Blounts, for £115 15s. Strother sold a small portion of these lands in the next few years, but the remainder were returned to John Gray Blount in probate action after Strother's death in 1816. Presumably these lands were always under the control of Blount. Arthur, *Western North Carolina*, 137-139; John Strother to Blount, December 29, 1798, in this volume.

Enemies to the very measures which I solicited them to adopt[;]
having effected my [3] release Strother & myself go to Europe
and make one more effort to sell which I am convinced can be
done at one dollar per Acre for all and every Acre I hold in
Georgia & elsewhere, about 3.000.000 Acres in all

In an arrangement going forward in York I expect to procure
funds to discharge your debt to Abel James, & to forward you
enough to discharge my arrearages to you and pay part of your
Buncombe lands which you offer me — I have sent you the land
list preferring to let you manage it with Blackledge & Strother,
that no hold can be taken to prevent my designs. I have only one
assurance to make you that whether I am able to serve my
friends or not as I would wish, that all in my power I will do, and
that no situation of life no Jail no Threat shall compel me, that
Torture itself shall never force me to forsake my *friend*[.] you
may therefore rest assured that my own situation has no induce-
ment to the present step and that I will yet complete my objects
in spite of every enemy however great—I mention Strother to
be the purchaser as he has no family and can better accompany
me to Europe [4] than M^r. Blackledge[;] in doing this I fear
M^r B may be offended. I leave you the management thereof.

M^r Shannon will forward you money from time to time for the
Taxes on the lands transfered when in Trust therefor no sale
must be permitted there, he has been my steady friend thro all
adversity [;] I wish however in every case except where Shan-
non holds that the lands should be sold as before stated.

I forwarded to W^m. Blount a note drawn in your favor for
80^m dollars that an attachment might be levied on my property
there. I mention this that you need be at no loss if an enquiry
should be made[;] the note bears date 25th. May 1795 payable at
two Years[;] give the necessary directions on that Subject. I
also inclose you other notes for the payment of the lands conveyed
me to wit 500.000 Acres at 1/. 39680 in Beaufort at 50 cents.
179594 Acres in Knox County 25 Cents [last two words struck
through] the deed expresses 95000 D^{rs}. and 55^m dollars for the
Tennessee lands making in all 232340 for which Col^o. Blount
has receipted to me[.] I do this that you may come in for your
proportion in case I surrender as I expect to do.

Yours

David Allison
July 16th 1798.

David Allison to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

Philadelphia Aug^t. 18th 1798

D^r Sir

From the advices I had from you and M^r Blackledge that unless funds could be forwarded in time all the lands in N^o. Carolina would be inevitably lost by sales for Taxes, to prevent this as much as possible, I have contracted with M^r. Shannon to whom I have conveyed in Trust the lands in your name in Robison County and those in my name in Moore County and he now goes forward to pay those Taxes as well as these in Beaufort. I have considered this plan more eligible than to permit a total sacrifice, M^r Shannon promises to hold them for my use to pay the Taxes & never to sell any part of them without my advice and obtaining the price I set on them—from the proceeds of the sales, his money to be refunded him, as M^r. S. is an honest man as well as friendly and as I could do not better, I adopted this plan—every exertion that could be made has been and they have as yet proved abortive[;] the sickness here⁹⁹ now totally prevents ar[2]rangements being made until it ceases—I have M^r Trenchard¹⁰⁰ at York to save some property in that state which I hope and trust he will accomplish and with it[,] as it is very valuable[,] procure funds for the discharge of the Taxes and your relief which to me will be a pleasing circumstance in my present distress[.] I beg you to shew M^r Shannon every attention which may be grateful to his feelings, as he is a friend to me *indeed*

I am yours &c

David Allison

Sept. 10th. 98

M^r Shannon not having set off as he expected I again write to inform you that no further success in money arrangements has taken place and the resource from which I had hopes, is for the present equally abortive as will appear by Trenchards letter, altho it may shortly be had but fear not in time to answer the purpose for which it is required, What is to be, or can be done God knows I cant possibly do more than I have done and if [3] it must be sacrificed, it will the sooner bring my situation to a

⁹⁹ One of the terrible yellow fever epidemics in Philadelphia. McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, II, 410 ff.

¹⁰⁰ J. Trenchard was apparently a merchant or land speculator of New York who became involved in a few land deals with David Allison in 1798. Allison to Blount, July 16, 1798; and J. Trenchard to Allison, September 1, 1798, in this volume.

Crisis, I hope however that some delay may take place on account of the sickness and I promise being this once out of the scrape I will never be caught so again for I will begin my preparations for the next immediately on knowing for what I have to provide I need not ask your aid I know your will in that particular if you had the means — whatever you can do, aid with it, perhaps Sha[nnon]* may accept bills for two thousand dollars —————* aid, on his seeing some of the property and being satisfied with the Titles, I offered him the 250,440 Acres in Buncombe to procure funds for the Taxes the sickness prevented him doing it, perhaps you can arrange with him, I told him you had the Patent for it

I am respectfully yours &c.
David Allison

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r
Washington
N^o. Carolina

Mr Shannon

[enclosure]

New York September 1st 1798

Dear Sir /

I received your very pressing letter of yesterday respecting money for the taxes, of your North Carolina lands, and am really much mortified that I have it not in my power to remit you that sum, owing to the cursed fever which has raged here with such violence for this week past, that the Citizens are a flying in every direction to escape the contagion; which has put a stop to all business in this place. I have finished my negociation with the Doctor,¹⁰¹ the papers are sealed signed and ready for delivery, and for me to receive the cash, but he amongst the rest has gone of[f], but is to let me know immediately upon his return to this place, and then comes forward the much wished for, the cash. From some conversation I had with my friend Edmund Prior I think it best for me to remove [2] my quarters he tells me that no business will or can be done before the fever abates which he

* Word obscured by seal.

¹⁰¹ Probably Doctor John Hall, who was involved in land transactions with John Gray Blount and David Allison at this time. Thomas to John Gray Blount, May 3, 1798, in this volume.

hopes will be the case in a month or six weeks, so you may expect me on immediately and indeed if I had not meet with my friend Mr Paul who promised to deliver you this I should have saved postage by delivering it my self. As you are now sure of receiving the money so shortly have you no friends in North Carolina that you can get to come forward. Mr Prior desires to be remembered to you.

Your[s] Sincerely
J Trenchard

Addressed: David Allison Esq^r
Philadelphia

Favd. by Mr
Jerimiah Paul

*Francis Harvey to John Gray Blount*¹⁰²

[September 27, 1798]

Mr. John G Blount
Sir

I duly received your favor of the 19th Current & have hazarded on the strength of its assurances a postponement of the Sale of your lands in this County as you will see by some future Fayetteville paper: But it is highly proper you should know the extent of the Service I there by aim at rendering you and the situation in which it places me[.] By a Reference to the acts of Assembly you will perceive that had I sold I was entitled to double tax. By the Postponement I am Subject to the charge of advertizing anew and of advancing mean while the amount of the Tax in question to the Treasury should your Express not succeed in saving me that inconvenience. But the Consequences of the Sale had it taken place would have inevitably been tho Sacrifice of your lands and particularly of those late Gibbs's for I could not (and still less can I now with the responsibility I incur on your accot.) consider the Money paid me by Mr Anders on your behalf as discharging that particular part of the premises advertized No Mention of the kind having been made at the time I received that amount which for your Government was Nineteen Pounds

¹⁰² For the explanation of this letter see Blount to General Thomas Brown, October 23, 1798; and Brown to Blount, April 14, 1800, in this volume.

12/5 not £ 29. 12. 5 as you will see by recurring to the Rec^t forwarded you from hence 1st of the M^o —

It will be for you Sir to estimate this Service & to see that the Indulgence you have Desired & which I have granted with entire confidence in your Justice does not injure my [2] interest in a pecuniary point of view at the same time that it powerfully befriends your own —

I expect the pleasure of hearing from you in course of post if I should not meet your express at Raleigh for which place I shall set out in 2 or 3 days at farthest

Mean while I am

Sir

Your most obed Servt

FW Harvey

Elizabethtown [Bladen County]

27th September 1798

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r.

Washington

N^o Carolina

Richard Blackledge to John G. L. Schenck

Grays Ferry 3 Miles from Phil^a Oct^r. 1st 1798

Dear Sir

This will informe you of the death of Dav^d Allison with the prevailing feavour on Friday Evening the 28th. I was with him an Hour on Sunday before & fixed for an arraignment for me which was to be Effected by Thursday Morning following & then left with him to enable him to make some Notes & git some Information my Accot^t book respecting the Lands & the General Accot^t against the Two Companey's for his Inspection &^c. these were unfortunately with him at his death & I shall try to git [them] in the Course of this Week[;] whether I do or not I shall than Start for N^o. Carolina by way of the Eastern shore of Virginia Little York. Williamsburgh, swan point Ferry¹⁰³ at old James Town by the Cypress Church. Southampton Court House.

¹⁰³ From Jamestown, on the north bank of the James River and near the Cypress Church, to Swan's Point, on the south bank of the James opposite the mouth of the Chickahominy River. A. Lindenkahl, "Map of Part of South Eastern Virginia," Prepared for United States Coast and Geodetic Survey [n.d., 1864?].

Princeton. the Burro: Taylors Ferry¹⁰⁴ & home [2] as to who ought to administer on the Estate of this man is a Question & this day [2] write Col^o. King to let him know of DA death. &c. I find I shall return as I come without doing any thing[;] I have not yet seen Evins [Evans] but expect to do it this day & am with Complements to my Friends

Yours &c

R. Blackledge

Read seale & forward this to J. G. B.

& tell M^{rs} Harvey of the Contents

The Letter from G. Denison Containing the post Note¹⁰⁵ for 480 D^s. from Baltimore if to your office forward to J. G. B. who will please to see to the payment of the Taxes ment^d to him in Carteret, Jones & Cumberland, this letter left Baltimore Thursday before the 25th Sept.

R. Blackledge

Addressed: John G. L. Schenck Esquire

Merchant

Tarborough

North Carolina

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarborough 12th Oct^o. 1798

Dear Sir,

I send you enclosed the plan of Reading Blount's Mill mentioned in your letter of the 20th Ult. it was buried under such a pile of papers that I could not send it sooner — I hope you will receive it soon enough[.] I have detained Tom¹⁰⁶ here since Wednesday last not because it was inconvenient to send him home, but because I feared the ill consequence to his health if his going too rapidly from the upper to the lower Country at so sickly a Season of the year. J[ohn?]. H[arvey?] informs me by Letter bearing date the 7th Inst. that although I have paid him

¹⁰⁴ Across the Roanoke River in Bertie County, northeast of Tarboro. Samuel Lewis, "The State of North Carolina . . .," [Philadelphia, M. Carey, 1795?]

¹⁰⁵ A species of bank note issued as a circulating medium during periods of excessive speculation and payable at a distant period and not on demand. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 1329.

¹⁰⁶ Thomas Harvey Blount, son of John Gray Blount, Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*, I, 36.

£ 1862.1.10 there yet remains due to him £ 1847.4. which he says in very delicate & affecting language must be paid between this & January or he shall be ruined both in pocket & Reputation—if he could be supported until January he says he _____* would then _____* again _____* In Gods nam[e]* can this payment be effected? By me it can[not]* be for two Reasons, first because my resources [are?]* exhausted & secondly because there is _____* to be had within the circle of my _____* on any terms—to pay an Execution again _____* for my Raleigh Lots I have been obliged [to bor][2]row upon the Credit of T. E. Summer¹⁰⁷ to be returned by the first of next month & how I am to provide for the return of it, God only knows: for at this moment I Don't know a man of whom I can possibly get ten Dollars by mortgaging my whole Estate—in fact there is no money here—the merchants have borrowed from the Planters every Dollar they had—I have not 10 Dollars in the world & owe in this Town 23—J. H. says he has written to you on the subject & relies with the utmost confidence on your affording him the necessary relief—God grant that you may be able—and pray inform me whether your prospect has brightened any since I saw you—has R[ichard]. B[lackledge]. returned or wrote you? and what has he done or said he has a prospect of doing? Tom can inform you fully of the state of my family's health I hope your family have by this time recovered & that they will remain well henceforward. C[om]p^{ts}. from all to all—

Y^{rs}. &c.

Tho. Blount

Addressed: John Gray Blount, Esq^r.
Washington

fav^d. by
T. H. Blount

* Manuscript torn.

¹⁰⁷ Son of General Jethro Sumner and brother-in-law of Thomas Blount. Ruth Smith Williams and Margarette Glenn Griffin (eds.), *Abstracts of the Wills of Edgecombe County, North Carolina* (Rocky Mount: Dixie Letter Service, 1956), 42-43, hereinafter cited as Williams and Griffin, *Abstract of Wills*; Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxv.

William Shannon to [Thomas Blount]

Alexandria Oct^r. 17. 1798—

D Sir

This moment I am informed by Mr Dennison of the death of David Allison, I thought it my duty to communicate it immediately; with a request that you will (if you think necessary) inform Mr J. G. Blount thereof as soon as possible—In conversation with you at Tarborough, as I passed through on Wednesday last, I recollect you mentioned that the State Attorney¹⁰⁸ resided there—Will you be so obliging as to ask him his opinion about the _____* near Washington taken up by your Brother John, and since conveyed to me, the following Question Viz. It is all surveyed and returned as lying in Beaufort County; it is the opinion of your Brother and some others that when the line is run between it and Martin County a proportion of the tract will fall in the latter—Can this affect the title? if so what must be the remedy?—

The lands belonging to Mr Allison say 102.000 Acres in Roberson County which I went forward to preserve by paying the taxes, was sold two days after I arrived at Washington, and while the express sent by me was on his way to discharge them—I think it hardly probable that the Sherriff has done every thing according to law—they were advertised for Sale on the 15th or 17th of August, and postponed until the 26th September—I am told the Law requires 40 days notice.—Is the Lumberton newspaper printed daily? if it is not possibly the sale is illegal—my wish is, that every reasonable step should be taken to detect the Officer, and to recover the lands—Excuse the freedom.—My best respects to Mr J. G. Blount—please show him this letter, or make known its contents to him.—lastly, please favour me with a line when you are at leisure.

I am D Sir

With much esteem

Your Obd^t Serv^t

W^m Shannon

¹⁰⁸ Blake Baker, an active Jeffersonian politician; State Attorney General, 1794-1803; and Superior Court judge in 1808 and 1818. He died in 1818. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 303, n.86; Baker to William Kennedy, June 28, 1800; and Baker to Blount, July 6, 1800, in this volume; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, November 13, 1818.

* Illegible.

*Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount*Milton near New Bern 18th. Octobr. 1798

Dear Sir,

The Success of my electionering Schemes have been fully conveyed to you before this; and the cause of my long Silence I presume you are not a Stranger to. I intended to have written to you by Jn^o Simpson and he was to have called for my letter, but did not, and in the lanquid state I was then in, to write a letter required some excitement (as the Doctors term it).

From the time I wrote you the latter end of June 'till late in August my attention & time was fully occupied in preparing for the election and winding it up. so that I had not time to write to a friend (*without the district.*)¹⁰⁹ Early in September [,] the 3^d [,] I was taken ill and though I did not think myself dangerous yet the *faculty*, thought me so, and the town *actually* put me to death. However by Osborn's¹¹⁰ exertions and a good constitution I am still among the living to the satisfaction of my friends and the mortification of my enemies; & I hope to be so 'till I see or hear of all the latter, (that I [2] now know of) being under foot—I was very much mortified when I heard of the fate of the election in your division—I was not only sorry that your Brother Tom had lost his election, but that he should be out polled by such a man as Alston¹¹¹ But I hope that Tom will not yield the palm to him Because he has been successful once out of three times; and that at a time when not only the popular currant had taken a sudden turn but when it must be acknowledged on all hands that election was not lost by Alston's popularity in the district, but owing to a private enemy by underhanded means taking off 1000 of his votes, that if the election was to be held again without the *artificial* heat, raissed on the occation, & too late to be subdued, he would not get the third part of [it].

¹⁰⁹ *I.e.*, to a person who could not vote for him in his recent race. Spaight won election to the House of Representatives, succeeding Bryan, and took his seat on December 10, 1798. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 59.

¹¹⁰ Doctor John C. Osborne once resided in Washington, North Carolina, under Blount's patronage. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 398-399.

¹¹¹ This election was heated. Thomas Blount ran against Willis Alston, John Binson, and William Kennedy. He was accused in a circular of being involved in the land frauds of 1798 and of being involved with his brother William in the conspiracy that led to William's expulsion from the Senate. Thomas even had an exchange of blows with Abraham Hodge. A staunch Republican, Thomas was the only candidate in the election who would not pledge his support to the measure of the national government, and Alston won the election, beginning a long career in Congress. Alston's victory apparently did not cause him to lose touch with the Blount family. Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, 96; Willis Alston to Blount, March 8, 1800, in this volume.

My two Sons have both been attacked with the fever, from which they have recover'd, but are not quite well yet. I hope your family are in good health—

I wish to know whether Mr T Blount carries M^{rs}. Blount [with] him to Philadelphia,¹¹² or not; if not [3] how he intends going on. On this subject I should wish to be informed as soon as possible[.] I intended to have written to T. B. by this post but a person came here on business & staid so long that I had not time to do more than write to you.

I am with respect & Esteem

your friend

Rich.^d. D. Spaight

Jno. G. Blount—

Addressed:

Free

John Gray Blount Esqr
Washington

John Gray Blount to Thomas Brown¹¹³

Washington Oct^r. 23rd 1798.

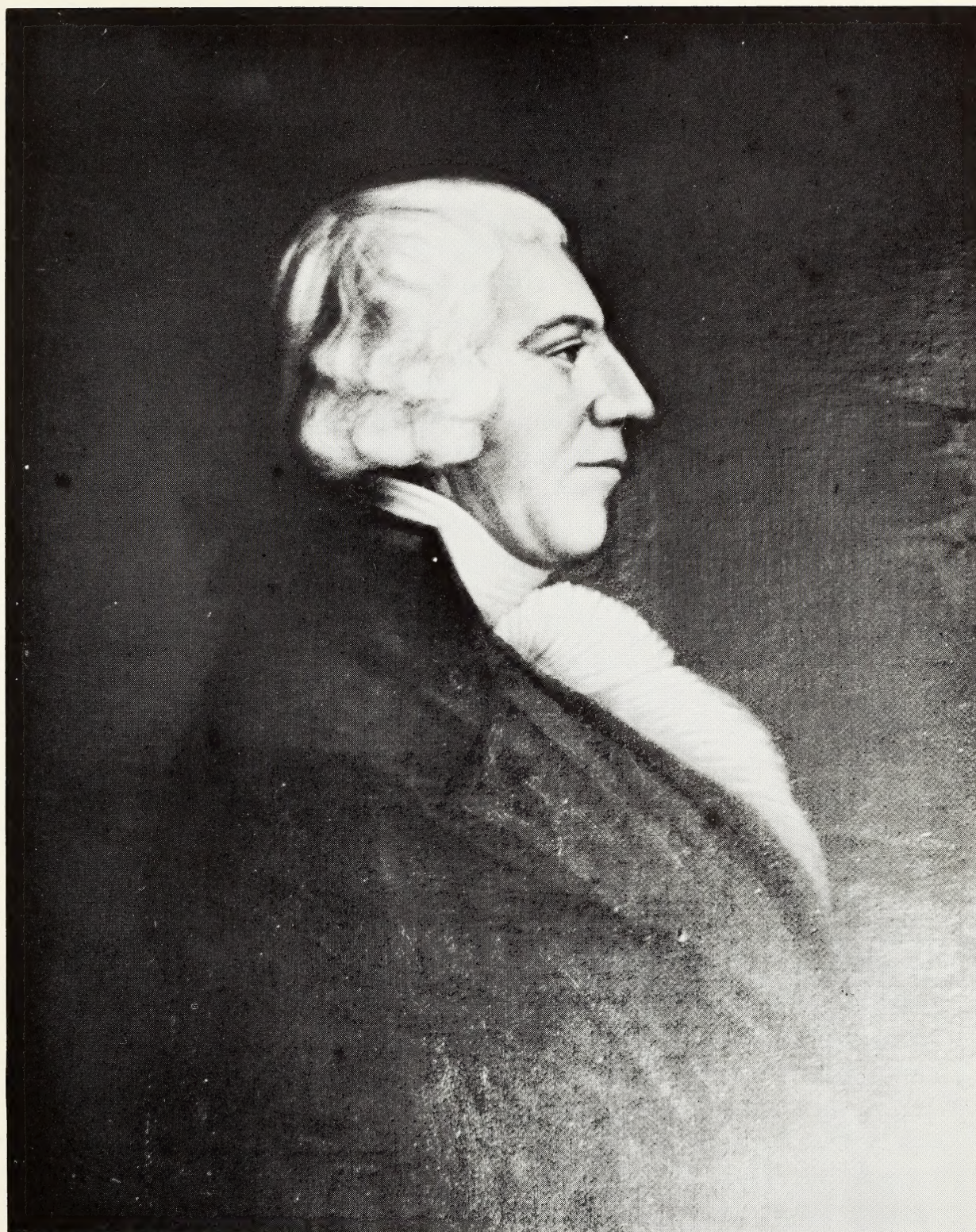
Dear Sir

I rec^d by last New Bern Mail yours of the 6th Ins.^t. informing me that the Sheriff¹¹⁴ of your County had advertised amongst others & intended Selling for the Taxes my White Marsh Land at which I must confess I am much Surprised, but not so much so, as I Should have been had I not of late had So many proofs of men endeavouring to injure each other Without a prospect of gain; and he may have Some prospect of that. I have however been taught to believe that common honesty was at least to be expected from him and if that is the case he will not attempt to Sell that Land. He has rec^d from M^r. John Andres for me £ 19: 12: 5. which I requested M^r. Andres to pay him and Some time last month before he Settled his Acc^t. with the Treasurer requested him by letter to appropriate what was necessary of that Sum to the payment of the White Marsh Land & the balance to Such of the other Lands granted to me as he thought most

¹¹² For the lame duck session of 1798-1799.

¹¹³ A large landowner, legislator, and speculator of Bladen County. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 115; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 44.

¹¹⁴ Francis Harvey, of Bladen. See Harvey to Blount, September 27, 1798, in this volume.



Richard Dobbs Spaight (1758-1802), first native-born Governor of North Carolina. Photograph from the files of the State Department of Archives and History.

valuable; and I believe it was never doubted but that the Payor had a right to choose where he would have a credit placed even when he Owes a Note & Acc^t. he Surely then may choose which [2] Lands he will pay for and which not, and the Law is clear that one piece of Land is not bound for the Taxes of another, otherwise it would not point out that 1/10 Should be Set up at a time & So proceed until the whole of it is Sold unless the Sum necessary Should be sooner raised and So the whole tenor of the Law runs; it Shall be advertised in a certain manner; on what Water Course in whose position to whom granted &.. which plainly proves what I alledged,—But in my present case I need not be So particular for in June last I Sold that Land to a Mr.. Luke Robinson of this County but as I warranted it free of incumberances I must pay the Taxes due to that time, for by the Law of 1793 or 1794 the Land is liable for its own Taxes even if given in by me & I had removed,¹¹⁵ and in the next place I do not now, or did I at the time the Tax for which they are advertised became due[,] own one foot of the Land granted in my name in Bladen County, but it was not my business, but that of the Owner of them to record his Title, and I thought it might Serve the Owner and could not injure the Sheriff I have begged a postponement of the Sale of them, however have heard they were offered for Sale but no price offered I hardly Suppose that can be the case,

If by Suffering my credit to be injured in having my Land advertised to Sale for [3] Taxes when in fact I did not own one foot of them I am to have that Sold which [I] was actually liable for even after the Tax for that was paid, it will be very hard; It may involve me in a Law Suit but cannot do me any other injury if they do proceed to Sell, To prevent that I Shall be much obliged if you will ask the Sheriff to examine the Law & be clear before he Sells, that he can lawfully Sell one piece of Land for the Taxes of another;¹¹⁶ and if he can hold an opinion So contrary to the Law; then please ask him if he thinks he can lawfully Sell the Lands of Luke Robinson to pay the Taxes of the Lands of David Allison who was the friend for whom I thought I was advancing the balance of the £ 19: 12: 5 after paying

¹¹⁵ *I.e.*, had left the country, or was no longer in possession of the land. Another possible meaning is, if Blount had removed this claim to some other location.

¹¹⁶ Harvey did sell the land and this resulted in a long struggle by Blount to extricate himself. See Blount to Harvey, November 18, 1798, in this volume; John Gray Blount-Luke Robinson Indenture, June 9, 1798; Memo of Evidence (1801); Regis^r's Certification (1801); Deposition of Richard Blackledge, March 1, 1802, in "Other Papers for 1796-1802," in this volume.

the Taxes of the White Marsh and it was to him Mr. Blackledge his agent was gone for money at Raleigh, but I was then mistaken[.] Mr. Allison had Sold the Land and Mr. Blackledge got no money

I trouble you with the last explanation as I Suppose Mr. Harvey will Shew you my Letter——* the idea [4] that the Lands were mine but all the Company have known long Since that I Sold them,—

Mr. Robinson to whom I Sold the White Marsh does intend to Settle his Son for whom he purchased on the Land before next Winter Twelve Months & Requests me to ask you to keep a Tenant on it the next year on the Same terms as the present and to give the present [one] a preference if he has deserved well of his Landlord

I cannot close this Letter without begging you will excuse me for So much trouble as I have hereby given you, and at the Same time returning you my thanks for your attention to my interest and assuring you that all times I shall be happy in any opportunity of Serving you—

With much esteem & due respect.

I am your most Obt.

J. G. Blount.

P. S You will much oblige me by informing me particularly whether the Lands of your County advertised in my name for Sale for the Taxes were put to Sale, for Such has been my information and [5], a gentⁿ. from Raleigh told me he heard the Sheriff tell the Treasurer they would not Sell for the Taxes; from the Letter I wrote Mr. Harvey my feelings are much interested to know the particulars of his conduct. This will add one more to the many obligations I am under to you

Yours &c.

J. G. Blount

Gen^l. Thomas Brown

* Illegible.

*Robert Love to John Gray Blount*Washington County [Tennessee] 2 Nov^r. 1798

Dear Sir

Since my last by Mr Strother I have thought that It will be most adviseable before we go into the Execution of Our Business for you to Compleat the surveying of your lands in Cumberland as I presume a number of disputes may be thereby Prevented; I wish to hear from you respecting the Business as I am urged on every Side. [Ex-] Gov^r. [William] Blount has lately been Elected a Senator for the County of Knox in the place of Gen^l. White¹¹⁷ who has resigned to fill a federall appointment; & if the plan Succeeds which is Now in Contemplation I Expect he will fill the Gov^{rs}. place Once more & by way of that I will Suggest that [2] he will undoubtedly be appointed Speaker of the Senate at the first assembly which is to Convene the third day of Dec^r. Next by a Call of the Gov^r. & Shortly after the rise of which you will Probably hear that Gov^r. Sevier will resign; the above I hope will not Transpire untill after the plan is fully matured¹¹⁸—my Best respects to your Lady Mr B: Blackledge & Mr. R. Blackledge and in a Particular manner Col^o R. Blount

I am your Very Humb^l. Sev^t
R Love

Mr. J G Blount

[3] P S one of the deputy surveyors of Buncombe has Certified to me that he made a Survey for John Roberts on Walnut Creek of 200 acres agreeable to the Location Entered on the 10th of May 1796 and is the land he lives on for which he Prays a Quit Claim[.] the land^s I am well assured have been Excluded which will more fully appear by having reference to the list.

R Love

Addressed: Mr. John G. Blount
Washington

P^r. favour of
Tho^s Sevier

¹¹⁷ General James White, a close political associate of William Blount, and the founder of Knoxville. Masterson, *William Blount*, 207.

¹¹⁸ For the plan and its failure see Masterson, *William Blount*, 338.

*William Shannon to John Gray Blount*Philad^a. Nov^r. 5th 1798

D Sir

This I write you from my own House in the City, where we are all at length arrived in safety except one of the family who fell a Victim to the fever in Virginia — I wrote you immediately on my return as soon as I could collect any information which I expect you have received — My next letter, which will probably be in about ten days will inform you of all I know, or can collect respecting the paper you mentioned. My family inform me that they wrote me several letters; one of the purposes they had in view, was to give me early information of the death of David Allison, these letters I expect you must have received shortly after I left you, and as a person interested in his affairs made such use of them as your Wisdom directed.—I have been look[ing] almost daily for letters from you since my arrival as yet I have not received any — on the receipt of this if you have not done it before, please to write me as fully as you can on all the subjects in which you think I am interested, as well as those in which you think I can be useful to you — On my abilities to serve you little can be said, on my integrity you may rely. There are many applicants to Administer to D A estate here, and almost all a pennylesse sett[;] for my own part I am of opinion that I can either get them in my own name, or be concerned with some other, if I knew it would be any benefit: but this I am at a loss to discover, your opinion on this subject of course would be very agreeable[2]

Give my respects to Mr. Blount and family Your Brothers
& C^a.

I am D Sir

your most Obed^t ServantW^m Shannon

Free

Addressed: John G Blount Esquire
Washington
North Carolina

*John Gray Blount to Francis Harvey*¹¹⁹Washington Nov^r. 18th 1798

By Post I rec^d your letter of the 27th. of September. but previous to the receipt of that I was informed by a young man who went Express from this to Lumberton, (and by whom I wrote Mr. White) that the Whole of the Speculation Lands were sold for Taxes but brought nothing, That account was corroborated by what the late Sheriff of our County heard you tell the Treasurer vis that there was large body's of Speculation Land in your County which would not command one Shilling — hence I was led to believe you had actually Sold or offered the Sale of all [of] them, you however Say otherwise & I See have advertised them to be Sold on the first of December as Well as the Land formerly Gibb's at which I am much Surprised when Mr. Andres had deposited for me in your hands a sum amounting to more than the Taxes of that Land, and which I had a right either to draw out of your Hands or appropriate to what other use I pleased; and the Letter I wrote you before I knew you had rec^d it [the money] directed it Should first discharge the Taxes on the [2] Lands bo[ugh]^t. of Gibbs then as far as it would go the next most valuable Land. how then even by the Strict rules of Law to which you Seem to allude can you pretend to hold on upon that Land for the Taxes of the others; perhaps had you have held differing notes of mine [or] the money had been left with you as a payment for me without directing on which to place the C[redi]^t. you might have made the election, but it is Surely otherwise with the Taxes on Land for, by Law no other property is bound to pay the Taxes on Land not listed but itself; & that [land is] to be Sold 1/10th at a time — Surely then one piece of Land which I held at the time the Taxes thereon became due cannot be liable for the Taxes of another in the Same Situation, where either one or both were sold by me before the time of collection, and in this case both are Sold & the one of Gibb's since the Taxes became due[;] and the Law has made Land liable for its own Tax even where given in by the Person who then held it If there is not personal property in the County of the Person who gave it in to pay the Taxes[.] I was therefore bound to pay them or make good the Damages to the Person to [3] whom I had Sold —

¹¹⁹ See Francis Harvey to Blount, September 27, 1798; and Blount to Thomas Brown, October 23, 1798, in this volume. Also see, John Gray Blount-Luke Robinson Indenture, June 9, 1798, in "Other Papers for 1796-1802," in this volume.

The others [*i.e.*, other lands] I thought Mr. Allison still held & Mr. Blackledge his agent went on to Philad^a to raise the money to pay the Tax but they had been long Sold & Mr. Allison is now dead, It was therefore I wrote you what I did, but by that you cannot have Suffered as the Lands will now bring as much as they ever would have done, and if they would not bring the amount of the Taxes, by puting off the Sale the prospect was better than Selling; but if at my instance the Sale has been put off I hold myself obliged thereby and hereby return you my thanks

I am

Your Most Obt.

J. G Blount

Francis Harvey Esq^r.
Sheriff of Bladen

William Shannon to John Gray Blount

Philad^a. Nov. 19, 1798

D Sir

It is surprizing to me that the mail from your place to this is so long coming — Your first of the 24th ulto. which was 14 days after I left Washington, did not arrive here until the 17th Instant. I wrote your brother Thomas from Alexandria the moment I heard of the death of David; since I came home I have wrote you at least two — All the letters received for me at Washington please to destroy—In my letters to you I have hinted every thing which I conceived could be useful in D's affairs I now frankly give my opinion that if any thing can be done to save either you or me it must be by finding [2] money to buy his lands when they are selling for taxes — I do not expect the letters of Administration will be worth a farthing here — it is probable me and my friends can procure them inspite of the Host of locust applicants, they will not be granted for some time.—Please give me all your sentiments on this Subject as they occur, if any thing can be done to help us out of the difficulties we should now be Vigilant, and I will lend every aid in my power on your account as well as my own

I am confident that D has no pro-property [*sic*] in this State therefore whatever is to be done must be to the Southward — I

wrote before on the subject of the Notes, as far as in my power and the deranged State of the place would admit — In my next you[3] will get my ultimatum on that subject, and however painful it shall be just — Hempseed is not in Town. I will try to get it from the back Counties — While any hope hovers around us do write me often — You will probably hear from me weekly — Give my best respects to M^{rs} Blount [and]* all friends—

I am with regard
Your Obed^t Servant
W^m Shannon

Addressed: John G. Blount Esquire
Washington
North Carolina

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Phil^a. 6th Dec^r. 1798

Dear Sir,

I arrived here at 9^o'Clock on Tuesday the 4th. Inst. which happened to be in good time: for a quorum of the H of Rep^s. did not appear until yesterday, & a quorum of the Senate did not appear until to-day — I suppose we shall receive the President's communications to-Morrow & proceed to Business the day following — The news from Europe of Nelson's victory over the French fleet at the Mouth of the Nile, you will have rec^d. before this reaches you, & by the same Papers you will perceive that the late proceedings of the Congress at Radstat wear a pacific aspect[.] Doctor Hall is in Town & has called on me to know if I brought any thing from you for him — I told him I had but did not know what[;] that in a few days I should get settled in my lodgings & would then look over the papers & inform him what they were. in the mean time I shall see M^r Shannon & get from him such information as will enable [2] me to converse understandingly with him on the subject of your Business. I hope to inform you in my next what I have done or have a prospect of doing — The Doctor tells me that he has made an arrangement for sending 40 hands & 4000 Dollars under the direction of a very clever superintend[e]nt to carry on the Shingle getting

* Obliterated.

Business on his Hyde Lands, & that he shall be prepared to embark for Europe early next Spring — I understood that administration upon the Estate of D A has been refused to more than a Dozen applicants on a supposition (perhaps information) that he had left a Will at Knoxville whence no positive information has been rec^d. We had a safe Journey & a more pleasant one than could have been expected the Season of the year & the mode of travelling considered for we had neither wet nor cold weather until the morning of our arrival — however Jackey under all these advantages caught a violent cold & is today considerably indisposed[3] She joins me in Love to all your family —

I am as usual

Yours

Tho. Blount

Addressed: M^r John Gray Blount
Washington
N^o. Caro.

John Strother to John Gray Blount

Raleigh Dec^r. 29th. 1798—

Sir

If anything should happen that I do not raise money to pay the balance of the Tax's in Buncombe—Would it, or would it not, be good policy, or will it be Legal, or could the State invalidate it — if I was to sell & convey any One Tract — reserving to myself 10.20.or more thousand of Acres, within such Tract — to be taken in any part of the Tract that I should Think proper to point out in a year or Two year, or in any Limited time Specified — you Will take it into account that the conveyance may be bonafida made to some one Person so as to prove the Contract if it became Necessary — Write me on this head — There is, I observe a Number of persons on the Lists Annexed to the Grant — Entitled to quit claims by Said list — that has not Entered their Land in the time given by Ragsdale to do so — still it appears that [2] a Certain quantity of Land is reserved for them — what must I do where I find this is the case.—

If you think that a conveyance—such as I have mentioned will be good, send me a Copy of such a Deed, as you think will

Answer — & if Necessity compels; say to whom I shall convey¹²⁰ —

These are things that has presented themselves since we parted & I want your advice on them

If this Letter is not handed to you, previous to the boy's [boys']¹²¹ seting out for the University, write by the first Post — direct to Morganton —

My Compts. to Mrs. Blount & family
I am with Respect y^r. Ob^t. Serv^t
John Strother

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington

Attention of
Mr. Salter

LETTERS FOR 1799

William Pennock to John Gray Blount

Norf^o. [lk] Jan^y 27th 1799

John G. Blount Esq^r
Dear Sir

Your favors of 12^t. & 15^t. In^s are at hand the latter inclosing Bill of Lading for sundries on board the Lydia who has been a tedious time Loading & Mr. Van Noorden has put too many 18 In Shingles as they do not answer in Jamaica they will not when there is any others sell at all[.] If the Cargo had been Plank it would have done better but I suppose he put in what

¹²⁰ The money was not raised, and a total of 1,074,000 acres of Blount's land in Buncombe County was sold for taxes. Before this letter was written, Strother had already, in September, bought 570,880 of the 1,074,000 acres. Reed, *Beaufort County*, 169; Arthur, *Western North Carolina*, 137.

¹²¹ Thomas Harvey Blount and John Gray Blount, Jr. See Thomas Harvey Blount to John Gray Blount, March 8, 1799; and Joseph Caldwell to Blount, April 28, 1799, in this volume.

was most handy for himself[;] had she got away in any reasonable time she would have done well but I fear now she will be too late

I am yours with esteem
W^m Pennock
Free

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r.
Washington
North Carolina

Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount

Princeton 27th January 1799.

D^r. Sir

Your obliging favour of the 18th Instant I have received, and observed the Contents. I thank you for your attention to the Anchors, I have got them from Norfolk, I am now loading the Schooner for Jamaica and she will drop down to Edenton in the course of this week, if [William] Ross will not take the Fish let me know by the return post, that I might leave room in the Schooner to take them in, If Ross will not pay for the freight of the Tobacco I must, but I think Ross was to pay the freight or I would not have told you to have charged it to him, how ever I will submit to it any way that you may settle it. I have two Schooners out one by the Name of the Bee, Cap^t Denton Jam[aica] * bound for Barbadoes, loaded with White Oak Staves & heading sailed over the Barr the 28th. of October last, no acc^{ts}. of her since, the other the Catharine, Benjamin Brown Master bound to Jamaica or Antigua some acc^{ts} of her arrival in Antigua, she sailed over the Barr, the 21st. of November, if you have any Acc^{ts}. of these Vessels or Benjamin Blackledge please to inform me in your next—With Compliments to Mrs. Blount and family I remain D Sir

your Hb^l Serv^t
B. Coakley

* Manuscript torn.

P. S.

If Ross takes the fish you must make the best bargain you can for me with his _____*. Enclosed you have a Letter for Joseph Wallace please [send]* it to him

B. C.
Free

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Merchant
Washington

David Archer¹ to John Gray Blount

Guilford County, February the 9th 99

Dear Sir

I have some notion of going down to your part of The world to purchase some more Negroes in about one Month from This time and would be glad to know whether it would be in your power Conveniently to supply me or not and if it will on what Terms and by what Time and to that purport

I wish you to write me as soon as posable stating the prices separately of Fellows, Boys & Wenches & so on to any seise you have or will have by that time if you can make The prices answer it is very probable that you May get a handsom sum of Money on The Occasion

p^s. please write me the first post

I am Dear Sir very respectfully
your Most Obedient Hum^l Serv^t.

David Archer

John Hamilton of this County Desires
to be remembered to you

D A

Addressed: John G Blunt Esq^r
Beauford County
Washington Town
N. C.

By
Post

* Manuscript torn.

¹ Unidentified except as the head of a family of six. *Second Census: 1800, Guilford County.*

Anne Harvey² to Mrs. John Gray Blount

Tarborough Febyry 26 1799

Dear Sister

I returnd from Halifax on sunday Last, I spent the week very agr[ee]able in visiting my old Acquaintance[.] I had given my self so short a time to do it in that I was oblidge to make three visits in a day that was a great deal for me to do[.] I made an acquaintance with mrs Majr Long a very clever agreable lady she is to visit Washington as soon as her Husband returns from georgia he was dayly expected when I left there, she takes with her to Washington Miss Long, Miss Fanny Pasture, & Miss Coplin, she wishes much to see my Brother Reading I suppose they will call on him going or coming they talk of going by mr Norflets³ & returning by this place — I have been in a round of Company with the Great folks dined twice in Company with the Governor⁴ & Lady once at Judge sitgraves⁵ & once at mr. Burts[;] saw General Jones, Coll Hambleton, & General Eaton[;] was all the week at mr Jones & what do you think, for fear you could not guess I must tell you the General wanted to put the coat on me⁶ or at least I had the Vanity to think so — I want to see you very much all this Talk about Great folks is to ourselves & no one else, I was at the Ball Washingtons Birth night, & had Little Willis Alston⁷ for my partner all attention to me, what do you think of that now, that to ourselves to, I have a great many [2] pretty things to think over this week that past last week, every Lady of your acquaintance inquired particularly after yourself & family[.] mr Jones & Mrs [John B.?] Ashe both said they should have [been] very glad to [have] seen your Daughter at their house, Miss Betsy Lane inquired much after you[,] wants to see you very much[,] desired [me to give] her Love to you—Jackey wrote me last post that

² Sister of John Gray Blount and widow of Thomas Harvey. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxx.

³ Probably either Marmaduke Norfleet, a prosperous slaveholder whose home was in the Scotland Neck area of Halifax County, or James Norfleet, a lawyer of Edenton. "Census 1790," in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 605; Mary Blount to Susannah Harvey, September 26 [1796], n.190, in this volume; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, April 7, 1815, June 12, 1818.

⁴ William R. Davie. See Davie to Blount, July 4, 1799, n.54, in this volume.

⁵ John Sitgreaves, formerly a Blount lawyer, now a federal judge. See F. X. Martin to Blount, February 17, 1796, n.50, in this volume.

⁶ "... put the coat on me." The meaning of this colloquial phrase is uncertain. "Coat" may be a phonetical spelling of "court," and the widow Harvey probably means the General wanted to pay court to or flirt with her. A possible alternative is that the phrase is a variation of "put the gloves on" one, meaning to improve one, and in this context is a sarcastic reference to Davie's manner. Eric Partridge, *A History of Slang and Unconventional English* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 2 volumes, 1961), I, 673.

⁷ Alston had just defeated Thomas Blount for Congress in a bitter election centering about land frauds. Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, 96-97.

my Brother [Thomas] was very unwell with a very bad cold
hope to hear that he is well, as Betsy & myself are[,] we both
fatten on Visiting[.] I remain as usual Affetinatedly yours

Anne Harvey

Addressed: Mrs Blount
Washington

By negroe
man Charles

Amos Johnston to Richard Blackledge

T[uc]kahoe* ⁸ 3rd. of March 1799—

Dear Sir/

Agreea[b]le to your request I went on to —————* and
found Mr. Harvey⁹ to be very intent upon Selling and since he
would sell at all events, Gen^l. [Thomas] Brown was at Wilming-
ton with a boat-load of corn, so the chance of him was lost,
Mr. Bradley was out at his plantation and expected in Elizabeth,
so I co[u]ld not see him before Harvey beg[an] to sell, the
first he put up for sale was 840 Acres called the Gibbs planta-
tion on the white marsh, I thought it was an object to M^r Blount
and propos'd paying the taxes on the same but Mr. Harvey said
he wo[u]ld not receive any other way only so much in part of the
whole[.] it was struck of[f] to M. M. Baity [for £80?]* next
was 5120 Acres E[as]^t of Drowning Creek & —————† to
Wynne Nance for £5 — 10 —

18000 acres being part of 52980 acres on Waggama river to
Jacob Rhodes £2 — 2 — 0 —

17640 acres on the white Hall road to myself £2 — 5 — 0 —

2000 acres on the white Hall road to Neil Campbell £16/6

9000 acres where Hargroves Mill path Crosses the white Hall
leading to the white Marsh to Myself — 13/10

9600 acres on soal's Swamp to Jacob Rhodes £3 — 0 — 0

6336 acres between D. Creek white March to myself £2..5..6

* Writing smeared.

⁸ Near Tuckahoe Creek in southwest Jones County. W. C. Kerr, "Physiographical Map of North Carolina," in L. L. Polk, *Handbook of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Raleigh News Steam Book and Job Print, 1879), back cover.

⁹ Francis Harvey, Sheriff of Bladen County. See Blount to Thomas Brown, October 23, 1798; and Blount to Francis Harvey, November 18, 1798, in this volume.

† Illegible.

9350 acres on slap ass & the N^o. of the lake to Do—————
0 — 6 — 0

1120 acres E^t. of the white marsh about 3 miles to Do——0 —
3 — 6

14040 acres S^o. E^t. of the N^o W^t E^t. of the White marsh to Do——
0—2—6

4480 acres Begn near the S^o. W^t. end of Cedar swamp to J. Rhodes 1—2—6

3340 acres both sides of the brown marsh to Do 0.3.6

4200 E^{t.} of Slap ass————* to Colo¹ Dry——† 0 — 2 — 6

stake among three pines to [J. Johnston] 0 - 1 - 6

[2] 12[—]* 0 acres joining Brunswick line Et. of a ———* on the edge of the road leading from white to ————* to myself — £0 — 1 — 6

2000 acres [S^{es}?]* of the white marsh on the N of lake roc—†
2—2—6

6236 acres lying on Tryrer swamp to D°. 2—2—6

760[0]† acres on Bryans swamp No of ———† 0—5—0

1000 acres between slade swamp and Nelchs creek to myself
0 — 6 — 0

12550 acres on D. Creek & western prong to J R & W.R.O. 0 —
4 — 0

10240 acres being one half of 20480 acres on) 0 — 1 — 6
) myself

Black & south river & Colley swamp to)

10240 acres half of the above mentioned to Do 0 — 1 — 6

640 acres Begn at Blunts Corner & runs with the
Fryar N^o. to Neil Campbell 0 — 15 — 0

900 acres on the head of slap ass to Rob^t. Harvey 0 — 8 — 0

17090 Acres part of the 52980 acres to J. Rhodes 0—3—0

17090 acres part of the above to Jacob Rhodes 0—2—6

By which you may see the whole of the lands in that county was sold[.] my being bare of cash was the reason why I did not purchase more than I did you will see I got 1102.502 acres for £6 — 12/6 which was nearly all the cash I had with me —

The most that fretted me was that Harvey wo[u]ld only do his own way & proceed to sell the white marsh lands or Gibbs lands, tho he promised afterwards to get in with Mr. Baity to give it up provided Mr. Blount wo[u]ld send & refund the £80 — and pay him for his ride up to Elizabeth and pay up the balance of the

* Illegible.

† Writing smeared.

taxes which is £48—0—0 by the 10th. of this Instant[.] he has rec^d. of Mr. Anderson £19.12 — 7 and placed it to the account [3] of the same, I am very unwell so that I cannot go to see you [in] time for Mr. Harveys arrangements[.] I wish you to write me as soon as possible by post, or write Mr. Harvey what you intend doing about the Gibbs Land, if you intend to pay up you must send by the time — he was wanting me to pay up & take a title but I had not the cash, I was so sick as not to get home untill last night, since I find I can raise cash to answer if I co[u]ld purchase that land of Mr. Blount, please to lay the above statements before him as he may the better know how to act about it. I wo[u]ld give him the worth of the plantation & go forward & pay Harvey up — if I co[u]ld get it on good terms, I shall be at Newbern the first four days of the Sep^t. Court where I hope to see you & Mr. Blount, but sho[u]ld hope to see or hear from you sooner if possible to stop the mouth of Harvey & his company, and if Mr. Blount would let me have that land on any living terms I sho[u]ld like to go out soon & pay up — it appears to me me he had no right to sell as I offered to pay the tax and all accruing costs on the same, I am as usual your ever greatfull frind &c

A. Johnston

N. B.

The inclos'd is the papers you gave me to show to him[.] he says Mr. Blount holds himself liable for the tax on the whole by a letter —

Addressed: Richard Blackledge Esquire
in his absence to
John Gray Blount Esq^{re}.
Washington

Mr. Sam^l. Hawks,

This letter is committed to your care by the directions of R. B. with the request to you to send it as soon as possible, to him by post or otherwise —

Thomas Harvey Blount to [John Gray Blount]

University North Carolina [Chapel Hill] March 8th [17]99——

Honour'd papa,

I have waited as long as possible for an answer but receiving none I am afraid some accident has befallen you, but certainly

if that was the case I should have heard it by this time. I have written to the family about 6 Letters & have not even heard that you [are] well or any other circumstance about you since I left Home.

I as yet go on in Geography & Arithmetic & Hope to excell in them both — Mr. Caldwell¹⁰ says if I begin Surveying at July I cannot finish it untill next april and as for Navigation he says it cannot be learnt as well here as any other place, but this place is not calculated much for this state because they do not come to go through regular and therefore I cannot get a class to enter Navigation[.] I shall begin Euclid according to the will of Uncle Tom who says that Euclid is the best thing that can be learnt to speak well, However I shall go on in what I am studying untill I receive an answer from you, which please let be as soon as possible. My Love to the family I remain your ever Dutiful Son

P. S. John [Gray Blount, Jr.] is learning
the same that I am

T. H. Blount——

I hope you received the letter by Mr. Clark

William Blount to Colonel Thomas Hart

Knoxville March 13th 1799 (Wednesd[ay]*)

Dear Sir,¹¹

On Monday I received your Letter of the 20th Ult by Cap.^t Smith together with the Packet addressed to Mr. Norwood and this morning I forwarded the Packet by a Gentleman going directly to Hillsboro so that I believe you may rest assured of the delivery before the 6th of april. I believe it will be delivered at Hillsboro and to Mr. Norwood if there in 8 days from this day. — I have advised the Executors of Salter to forward without delay a Power to General Hopkins¹² to divide the green river Tract with you and count that they will do so. — Doc^r. Umstead called here on his return from viewing that tract, he appears highly pleased with it and I think though he does not say so will move there if he can dispose of his Property in Carolina for

¹⁰ Joseph Caldwell was named to a professorship at the University of North Carolina in 1796 and served until 1804, when he was made the first President of the University. R. D. W. Connor, *Documentary History*, II, 74, 434, n.43.

* Manuscript torn.

¹¹ From the Hart Collection.

¹² General Hopkins served as referee in the attempts to settle the business of the Transylvania Land Company and Salter's estate. See Edward Jones to Blount, May 6, 1799, in this volume.

any thing near what he considers the worth of it, he estimates Salter's part of that tract at 11090 dollars exclusive of that part which lies between the Ohio & the green river, which *at present* he estimates at no Value. — As for the Powell's Vally Tract I have advised that my Brother Willie should be appointed to make a division of it with you and I trust he will be appointed without delay. — Since the Recipt of your [2] Letter I have not had an Opportunity to speak with Mr. Houston but I will see him and inform you of his answer by the next post — I at present suspect the Multiplicity of Business that he has on hand will not permit him to accept your offer nor will my Brothers Business allow him time to act for you nor can I at present think of any proper person to recommend to you — Perhaps I may think of one by the next post — I would prefer Huston to any other if he could be engaged in the business. — To give you as accurate an Idea of the Value of the Powell's Vally Tract which I have never myself seen; I will inform you that Umstead examined all his part of it and after having examined it I believe (I do not say possitively) would have been glad to have taken 50 Cents per acre for it and I am of opinion would have taken if offered Cash in hand $33\frac{1}{3}$ — the highest he was offered was 50 Cents at 1, 2 & 3 years; Nor could he sell for such price as he would take for payments in hand picked pieces such as choice Bottom with good Springs — I believe he did not sell an acre any way — Mr Watson of Alexandria[,] whom you know as he was at Lexington with my Brother[,] who is a part owner of that tract sold some picked pieces excellent in quality for a dollar per Acre payable part Cash in hand & Credit for the greater part — Mr. Hogg¹³ also sold some picked pieces one at least & perhaps more for a dollar — Mr. Alves¹⁴ I believe sold none — I mention this to inform you how Sales have been made, my own opinion is that such Lands are worth at least 20/ Virg^a mony per acre but the fact is mony [3] is extremely scarce in this state and nothing but Provisions for the few Troops that are here will command its Value

¹³ Probably James Hogg of Hillsboro, a cousin of Robert and John Hogg, who with them owned a mercantile firm with branches in several North Carolina towns. He was an occasional business associate of the Blounts and served as a trustee of the University, 1789-1802. He was an active member of the Transylvania Land Company. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 473, n.99; Edward Jones to Blount, May 6, 1799, in this volume; Kemp P. Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina from Its Beginning to the Death of President Swain, 1789-1868*, Volume I; Volume II, *From 1868-1912* (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 2 volumes, 1907, 1912), I, 821, hereinafter cited as Battle, *History of the University*; David Allison to Blount, October 21, 1796, n.202, in this volume.

¹⁴ Both sons of James Hogg (Walter and Gavin) had their name changed to Alves by legislative act on the request of their father. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 147.

in Cash or near it and the direct Tax will render it much more scarce. — I am sir, with sincere esteem

Your obedient Servant
W^m. Blount

Addressed: Col. Tho. Hart
Lexington

William Mathews¹⁵ to John Gray and Thomas Blount
[with bill of lading]

Balt.^o. 19th March 1799

Mess^r John G & Tho.^s Blount

Dear Sir

Your favour of the 20th Ult^o. I Received by Capt. Smith, of the Sloop Nancy and Susan, and by her I now ship on your Account Seventeen Bundles nail and Spike Rods — as of Bill Enclosed, and in cash 22/8 which Captain Smith will pay you which will cleare our acc^{ts}., and am realy sorry that your Naval Stores did not turn out more to your Interest——this is Generally a bad market for those Articles — and naval Stores now will not bring 15/ for Tar or Turpintine——and believe pork will be dull Sale here this Spring unless our Shippers Shoul,d find out some other place to ship too than at present——

I am very Respectfully yours,
W^m Mathews

[2]

Mess^s. John G & Thomas Blount

To William Mathews

17 Bundles Nail & Spike Rods 25/ 21..5

Paid Stamping Bills loading 1..6

Paid drayage ditto 1..6

Sent them by Capt. Smith in full 1.2..8

22..11..1/2

[3]*Shipped in good order and well-conditioned, by *William Mathews* in and upon the good *Sloop* called *Nancy &*

¹⁵ An otherwise unidentified Baltimore merchant.

* Printed form. Words in *italics* are in longhand.

17 Bundles nail
Spike Rods }

Susan whereof is Master for this present voyage, *Ralph Smith* and now riding at anchor in the river Patapsco, and bound for *Washington* To say,
Seventeen Bundles Nail & Spike Rods Being marked and numbered as in the margin, are are [*sic*] to be delivered in the like good order and well-conditioned, at the aforesaid port of *Washington* [the danger of the seas only excepted] unto *Messr. Jno. G. & Thos Blount* or to *their* assigns, be or they paying freight for the said *Rods*, at *three Dolls P* with primage and average accustomed. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Master or Purser of the said *Sloop* hath affirmed to *two* Bills of Lading, all of this tenor and date; the one of which Bills being accomplished, the other *one* to stand void.

Baltimore, the 10th day of *March*, 1799

Addressed: Messr^{es}. John G & Thomas Blount
Merchants
Washington
Captⁿ. Smith

*H. Potter*¹⁶ to [*John Gray Blount*]

Raleigh, 25th March 1799.

Dear Sir

Your letter came to hand since the rise of our Court. but the progress & present State of the Suits I here give you. — Scir fas [Scire facias]¹⁷ issued to your County, but were not returned—alias Sic fas. issued to this County & were returned to last Court, “not found”—and now they are ordered to issue again, to Orange County. I have kept an eye over them, but wou’d not enter an

¹⁶ Henry Potter, a lawyer born in Granville County who was appointed to the federal bench in 1801 by President Jefferson and served until 1857. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 451, n.3

¹⁷ A writ used to revive or have execution of a former judgment. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 1513. The Blounts were seeking to avoid satisfying a judgment against them.

appearance, lest they shou'd obtain Judgments; which they cou'd not do, but by an appearance, or upon two returns of the Shff, that the Defendants were not to be found. At the next Court (shou'd I not discover error enough to reverse the Judgments) I shall plead to the suits & send you a Commission to take the Testimony you mention, shou'd Col^o. [Abashai] Thomas then be in Gaol. but to send a Commission now, would answer no purpose; for the Depositeors cou'd not be read as evidence; because no issue is yet joined, nor are the parties in Court.

As notice must be given to the adverse party—it will be proper for you to fix on the House in Philadelphia, and the persons whose Depositions you wish; and inform me at or before Court; in order that I may give such notice: whereupon I shall fix the time I send you a Commission. [2]

Col^o. Thomas inclosed me an affidavit, containing a Statement of facts upon his cases, for the purpose of taking them into a Court of Equity—and I am conscious they might be carried there, by *regular bill*. but I do not think it wou'd answer any purpose; unless it were to hold the bill over as an original & recover the money back again. for although I am sure that Col^o. Thomas has Equity enough on his side; yet I am as sure that the Injunction wou'd be dissolved.

If possible, I shall extricate the Bail.

With Esteem

I am Y^{rs}. &c.

H. Potter

William Fisher Jr.¹⁸ to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

Newport April 8th 1799

Sir

I have Not the Pleasure of being Acquainted with You Personally — but think it my Duty to inform You of the Unhappy fate of the Brig Tully Capt. Staplesfort That was Captured in the turks Island Passage¹⁹ by a french Privateer and the hands Sent in to Kingston with Capt Barney[.] But fortunately Retaken afterwards by one of his Majesty Ships and Arrive[d] at Portroyal the 15th March and as I Came[.] But

¹⁸ Unidentified. Probaby a ship captain.

¹⁹ North of Hispaniola.

the 15th I applyd on Bo[a]rd as I expected the Capt. wished to write but he was gone to Kingston to see what he Could do in behalf of her[,] that is as The Hands Informed me[,] And I Came Away before he Came Down — Nothing more Particular only the Loss of both their Boats that the french Made their Escape In I Remain Your

Assured friend

W^m. Fisher Jun

To Mr Jⁿ. G. Blunt

N. B. I have Enclosed piece of the Newspaper for Better information Dated the 15th March

W. F.

Addressed: Mr John G. Blunt
Merchant
Washington

[enclosure]

[Newspaper clipping]

The Betsey sailed from Edenton in company with the brig Tully Captain Staplefoot, bound to this port, addressed to Messrs. Lindo, Lake, and Co. and was boarded in the Turk's Island passage, by a French privateer schooner pierced for 16 guns, but mounting only two, and was plundered of all her letters &c. The privateer afterwards took possession of the Tully, and ordered her for Guadaloupe; the Captain of the privateer reported that he had taken seven sail of American vessels during his cruse.

John Stanly²⁰ to John Gray Blount

Newbern April 11. 1799

dear Sir

In consequence of a conversation with Mr. [Edward] Harris I was induced to believe you wished to possess Some Bonds of

²⁰ Stanly (1774-1834) was an ardent Federalist politician of Craven County who served often in the House of Commons and in the Seventh and Eleventh United States Congresses. In 1802 he killed Richard Dobbs Spaight in a duel over politics. The Blounts knew both men, but were especial friends of Spaight. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 134-135; Wagstaff, *Papers of John Stee'e*, II, 676; *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1644; Spaight to Blount, March 28, 1800, n.44, in this volume.

Jessee Cobbs²¹ which are in the hands of Mr John Green — Mr. Green having been in town after Mr Harris & yourself had left this, I mentioned the subject to him — he requests me to inform you, that if you can extinguish an Execution against him which is in the hands of the Shffr of Craven at the Suit of Mr. Hall of Tarboro.²² for about £500 — he will give you Mr Cobbs Bonds for that Sum — this negociation would save Mr Green a Sacrifice of his property, & he therefore desires it to take place — Should you think proper to enter into this business, you must remember that the Sale of Greens property will be *Tuesday the 16th. inst.* at Newbern——& he can be no way interested in the sale of the bonds, but by the satisfaction of this Execution, *without the Sale*——Should an Opportunity offer for this place, before *the 16th.* please inform me whether you have relinquished the intention of getting the Judgm^t — in this Case Green will sell his House at private Sale—

I am with respect
Yr. Obdt. Serv^t
Jn^o. Stanly

J. G. Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John G. Blounte Esquire
Washington

Free

William Farris²³ to John Gray Blount

Bermuda Hamilton²⁴ April 14th. 1799

Sir

Have dl^d your letter to Mess^{rs}. Cox and Robinsons — their papers and yours are now in the hands of a Mr Frank Robinson for adjustment — they promise fair. Yours to Mr. B. D. Harvey have left at his house about four miles from this. R^d. Wood and Brothers have administered on the late Joseph Woods Estate — they are men of respectability — as soon as I get the papers from Mr Harvey shall present them for Settlement.

²¹ Blount sought these bonds because they represented his and Richard D. Spaight's debt to Cobb. He did not secure the bonds and they passed into the hands of Stanly, Spaight's mortal enemy. See Spaight to Blount, October 11, November 6, and December 18, 1800, in this volume.

²² Edward Hall was a wealthy planter of Tarboro who also engaged in mercantile pursuits. In the 1790 census he is shown as owning 86 slaves. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, II, *passim*; "Census 1790" in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 55; Thomas to John Gray Blount, July 1, 1800, in this volume.

²³ Unidentified.

²⁴ A port on the west side of Main, or Bermuda, Island.

I have hopes to get meal or malt for both your claims unless some obstacle arise which I dont see at present. The very bad market here for provisions obliges me to stay behind[.] with respect to Mrs. Blount &c am your Ob^t. & h. Ser^t.

W^m Farris

Should I not get home so as to attend at Raleigh on the 1st. June next — desire Mr. Palmer to have our Suit Continued. WF.

[2] Average prices at ven due

Hams	_____	11 ^d .
Tallow	_____	14 ^d .
pease	_____	6/7
flour	_____	81/
flooring boards		205
Pork	_____	95
Pitch	_____	26/8
Tar	_____	20/6

Masts & keels in demand

Shingles 26/8
Dunghill fowls 3/4
corn — retail 6/4

Addressed: J. G Blount Esqr.

Washington

C Sch^r Anne

Jonathan Price²⁵ to John Gray Blount

Edenton 14th April 1799—

Dear Sir

I traveled in different Routs after I left Raleigh about 13 hundred miles. Viz — from Raleigh to Smithfield from there to Tarborough from there through Edgecomb Nash and Halifax to Warrenton from there to HalifaxTown and to Tarborough again from there to Bertie and Survey^d most of the Roads there[.] went to Hertford and thro[u]gh Northampton to Halifax Town again and from there to the uper end of northamton and then down to Princeton[,] Winton and from there thro[u]gh gates

²⁵ A surveyor and mapmaker who worked for Blount. See David Allison to Blount, February 18, 1796, n.53, in this volume.

[County] to Pasquotank so that We may flatter ourselves the Map is complete the only thing now that seems to be default is to have it ingraved[.] Mr Blake Baker. Mr Whyte of Glasgow D. Stone, Governor Davie²⁶ and Several others, being Desirious of giving us Assistance offers to advance 1000 Dollars on the Credit of the Sale of the map in each of their Counties. All that is wanted to be done now is to compile the whole again in order for the engraver[.] I wish to hear [2] from [John] Strother²⁷ to know in what manner it shall be done and if you have a convenient oppertuntty to Send all our papers to Edenton where I can get them at any time I should think they might be put into a Bag and convy'd with convenience on by a vessel to Nixonton.²⁸ I am in helth and wish to here from you and if you know where Strothers is as I have not heard Since he left Raleigh with

Respects to Mrs. Blount I am
Yours

Jonathan Price

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr.
Washington

_____ * by
_____ * wright

Hans Patten to John Gray Blount

Norfolk 25th. April [1799]

Dear Sir

I arrive here this morning from the north landing where I have been this Several days waiting the arrival of Pinkum²⁹ who has not yet appeared, you will inform Mr. Blackledge that there are dull appearances of Selling the fish as also the tar. nothing on my part Shall be wanting to effect the Sale of both.

²⁶ Price's backers were impressive: Baker was the State Attorney General and lived in Tarboro; David Stone (1770-1818) of Bertie County was a Congressman, Senator, and Governor; and William R. Davie of Halifax was a Governor and a national political figure. Robert Whyte was a State Senator in 1800 from Greene County (created in 1799 from the former Glasgow County). The maps also received legislative approbation and support. *Journal of the House of Commons* [1796], 41; William Shannon to Thomas Blount, October 17, 1798, n.108; Jacob to John Gray Blount, August 16, 1800, n.143; and William R. Davie to Blount, July 4, 1799, n. 54, in this volume; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 167, 168 (where Whyte's name is misspelled); *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, August 26, 1800.

²⁷ See David Allison to Blount, January 21, April 1, 1796, in this volume.

²⁸ On the east bank of Little River in Pasquotank County, formerly called Old Town. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, map opposite 64.

* Manuscript torn.

²⁹ Probably Joe Pinkham, a shipmaster of the Blounts. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 629.

I have with Some difficulty engagd 80 barrels of Corn in Pasquotank at 3 Dollars in order for Pinkum to proceed with to Washington with immediately on his arrival, after I left Washington I purchas of Henry Ellison his Girl bot at Brooks Vendue at 180 Dollars 80 to be p^d. on delivery & 100 at Court. Should any person Come your way that wants to purchase you Can get her as I desired him to deliver to you in Case you Call'd. I have been very much disappointed in receiving monies due me in Currituck & Pasquotank. therefore in Case of failing in Selling the fish I shall be hard run to pay for the Corn. if you have Sold my boy will thank you to forward to A. _____* or your Brother Jacob the Am^t. with directions to Send it to Mr. J. Shaw[,] Nixinton [2] please inform my mother where I am and that I am well & Shall be at home as Soon as possible. Corn is \$3 Do^l. in Cash here and getting very Scarce. the General election took place here yesterday Col Parker³⁰ beat Mr. Newton upwards of 300 votes in the 4 Counties. P. had a majority in Norfolk of 40. in the County 60. hard praying goes on rapidly to Day. remember me to McKinzee³¹ and your good family tell M^{rs}. Blount her friends are well[,] the old lady which Mr. J[ohn?] H[arvey?] wrote you respecting of is Since dead[,] wishing to See you Soon am

Dear Sir yours Sincerely
Hans Patten

Free

Addressed: John G Blount Esq^r.
Merchant
Washington N. Carolina

* Illegible.

³⁰ Josiah Parker (d. 1810) was a lawyer and a Representative from Virginia to the first six Congresses. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1425.

³¹ William McKenzie (d. 1810), an old friend. He represented Martin County in the State Senate, 1797-1800. *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, October 4, 1810; Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 16, 480; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 253.

Joseph Caldwell to John Gray Blount

Chapel Hill April 28 1799

Sir,

I received your letter respecting your sons and afterwards had the pleasure of seeing Mr Blacklege here with whom I had some conversation about them. I consulted with Mr Gillaspie³² and we concluded that John Blount might be placed in a different room after the quarterly examination; but we could not conveniently move them both together. This circumstance and an arrangement that afterwards appeared necessary prevented us from carrying that measure into effect. We might still indeed move one of them, but the advantage to him would be nothing. And I have to observe that whatever danger might have been received some time ago in living with their present companions, it is now perhaps almost totally done away. Sam Childs who is the only boy we could even be justly complained of as being of bad principles seems to have passed thro' a very great reform and to have become a regular and attentive student. The greatest dis- [2] advantage at present to be apprehended is what may arise from their roommates being all young. But as the warm season is now arrived they will not be kept in such close connection as during the winter when the same fire side was necessary to them all. They naturally during the day resort to the grove for the sake of study, and it is only at night that they are much together. Wilson Childs appears to me as innocent a little boy as we have in college. In the winter much inconvenience was suffered from Mrs Child's not furnishing her sons with wood or with money to buy it or to supply other necessities. On the above account and on account of the difficulty of altering the situation of affairs here in the middle of the session, we thot it best to defer moving them till July, when there will be a number of young men going away and leaving vacancies large enough and fit to receive them. The greatest reason why they must continue together whenever they move is because their bed is necessary to them both; and indeed if John had [3] changed his room without his brother, he must have slept in another persons bed and upon sufferance. You may be assured at present that their

³² James S. Gillaspie was appointed Professor of Natural Philosophy at the University of North Carolina in 1797, but became very unpopular and was physically beaten in a student uprising in this spring term of 1799. He was forced to resign as presiding professor and was succeeded by Caldwell, who then became President in 1804. Connor, *Documentary History*, 199, 241, 346, 434, 436.

companions are by no means irregular in their conduct, or in any way disorderly but have taken up a spirit of study which we are very happy to see. If you will pay us a visit in July you may in person have the pleasure of seeing your sons better settled, and I hope also of being amused by the proceedings of that time, which are anniversary

I am Sir, most res[pectfully]*
yours &c

Joseph Caldwell

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r.
Washington N. C.

Josiah Collins, Jr.³³ to John Gray Blount

Edenton 1st May 1799 —

Dear Sir,

As the gentleman, Captain Jackson who will deliver this is an utter stranger at Washington, I take the liberty of introducing him to your acquaintance, and of soliciting you to show him such civilities and attention as your convenience will admit of during his short stay at your place —

The object of his journey is to view and examine the Ship of mine in your care, in case your engagements will not suffer you to accompany him for those purposes, I beg of you to depute some person [2] to attend who can answer any questions he may ask respecting her — My knowledge of her, which I have made known to Captain Jackson, has proceeded altogether from the information of different persons, I however doubt not of her deserving the character that I have given her —

Captain Jackson and myself have so far agreed for the Ship that nothing remains to close the bargain but his approbation of her — The Sparrs and Blocks are to go with her —

I am dr Sir with much
respect yr obt ser^t
Josiah Collins Jun

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r
Washington
Captⁿ Jackson

* Manuscript torn.

³³ Brother-in-law of Jacob Blount, Jr. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 177, n.30.

William Farris³⁴ to John Gray and Thomas Blount

Hamilton Bermuda May 2^d. 1799

Sir

my last was the 14th Ult^o. P Cap^t Wilson Since then have not made any progress in settling with her your friends. Ben Robinson has lost evry paper that respects a voyage to Antigua when he Sold to M^r Charles Ker. Henry Robinson still promises to settle—but as he and Bengy are poor am afraid M^r B. Cox will put it off.

I cannot get a marvedi³⁵ from Thompson either on my a/c or M^r. Ross's

Ap. 30th arrived the ship Gen. Washington of Phil^a (16 Guns) prise to the H. M. Ship Lynx[.] may 1st an american Swede from St. Domingo[;] the ship was bound to new Orleans and is sugested to have contrebanded articles on board. This day arrived the ship formerly Goddess of plenty of Phil^a. now under Spanish Colours—from Loquira with Coco coffee & Indigo. Admiral Vandeput³⁶ and his Squadrons (5 ships) sails this day for the Halifax Station—on the other side is prices of diff^t. articles here.

I am with respects & compliments &^c
your H: Serv^t.

W^m. Farris

[2] Carolina pork \$15 to 17 retail Slow
Hams & Lard ————— 1/ — d^t
Corn—6/ pease $\frac{3}{4}$ — d^t
plank — £12 inferiour half price
Phil^a Flour 13. to 14 d^s
Mass pork ————— 24.
Sales at vendue Tar 20/ pitch & Turp. 26/8
Brandy best French in pipes 10/8 to 11/—
Rum Martinique — 6/
Sugar — d^t — 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 11 $\frac{2}{4}$
basketts anniseed — 5 ds.
Case Wine P doz 30/ to 60 — as in quality
Castile soap — 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ ^d —

³⁴ See Farris to Blount, April 14, 1799, in this volume.

³⁵ Probably Maravedis, a small-denomination Spanish coin. The word maravedis, however, had by this time become nearly synonymous with money or any denomination of it. W. A. Shaw, *The History of Currency* (London: Clement Wilson, Second Edition, 1896), 15, 320.

³⁶ George Vandeput. The illegitimate son of a baron, he spent his life at sea in the Mediterranean, East Indies, and North American stations. He came to the West Indies for the last time in 1797, was made admiral in 1799, and died in 1800. *Dictionary of National Biography*, XX, 99-100.

Goat Skins — 2/6 — to 5/ —

Hogsheads Claret 20 to 25 ds —

Keel prices in demand

Bills on London (Government) at Par — is 50 P C.^t

I expect to Sail from this with Mr B. Thompson in his Brig the Atlantic in fourteen days by way of Turks Island — which reduces my nonattendance at Raleigh to a Certainty[;] have therefore to request your Endeavours to [3] get my suit with my son in *Law Cont*^d.—If my absence will be the means of a Continuance it is well[;] If it will not, please to try Mr B: Palmer with good words.

My Comps if you

please to Mr F: X. Martin.

W F

Addressed: Mess^{rs}. J. G & Thos. Blounts

Merchants

Washington N^o Carolina

William Pennock to John Gray Blount

Norf^o. May 4th. 1799

Mr. John. G. Blount

Dear Sir

I have yours of 29 Ulto[.] in reply there appears no Spirit here for Shipping Naval Stores the prices being low in Europe when the Freight is taken into View but if you think proper to say your lowest terms I will endeavor to find a purchaser[.] If the Ship was here she might be sold but people are afraid of the detention of [*i.e.* by] N^o Carolina[.] It is expected the Montesima will come here from Jamaica if so it will be a good Opportunity[;] should it arrive in her or any other Vessel it shall be sent you as directed

I am your Ob Serv^t

W^m Pennock

Addressed: Mr. John G. Blount

Merchant

Washington

North Caro^a

*Edward Jones to John Gray Blount*Fayetteville May the 6th 1799—

Dear Sir

In consequence of your direction I have admitted Judgment against you on the different assignments of your Bond to Porterfield as well as those not assigned, but finding they could not force Judgment this term I required twelve mos. stay of Execution instead of six considering from your former correspondence that you stood in need of time, I have however admitted Interest to run untill the Judgments are satisfied with a condition that if any payments are prematurely made a discount of [Inte]rest* is to be allowed, for your information I enclose a record of the Judgments, there [2] has remained here on the Docket for some time a suit against you bro^t. by one [Jacob?] Rhodes on which I have prayed oyer³⁷ but have not yet had it

finding a suit against you and Edward Harris on the Hillsborough Docket I agreeable to your general directions entered a plea which has suspended the cause and will probably abate it, it is brought by the trustees of the University³⁸ and I have pleaded in abatement denying their right to draw you out of your own district.

You will please write a few lines to Mr Winslow[,] Clerk of Fayetteville S. C. approving of the fore going Judgments admitted by me for you as perhaps my filing your letter to me would not appear so well[,] having obtained better terms than you expected in regard to [3] time.

I have been pestered with powers of attorney from different people in S. C. to have a division made amongst the subpurchasers of Hendersons Transylvania Lands, amongst them is a power from Mr Shoollred who claims in right of his wife (a Middleton) a purchase from Dry who purchased from Hart[;] on investigation I find that Mr. James Hogg yourself Mr Shoollred and a Name I dont now recollect (and have not my memorandum book by me) own an original share,³⁹ very desirous of serving Mr Shoollred I have taken some considerable pains to gain information the result of which is, that should the parties inter-

* Manuscript faded.

³⁷ In old legal practice the defendant in a suit might "pray oyer," i.e., demand the reading of the deed by which he was being sued. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 1261.

³⁸ Suits were being brought by the trustees of the University against those who were indebted to it for land purchases in the District of Hillsboro. Hence though a trustee himself, Blount was sued. Connor, *Documentary History*, II, 391, 448, n.65.

³⁹ See Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 26-27; Edward Harris to Blount, July 16, 1798, in this volume.

ested be desirous of a speedy division, I conceive they ought [4] all to fix on *One* attorney in fact to act for them, and have proposed General Hopkins⁴⁰ as a man who from Information I believe to possess knowledge Industry and Integrity, pray favor me with your opinion on the subject and say if there is a present market for those lands and their value as all my correspondents On that subject are desirous of Selling

I have also a land warrant of my own 2000 entered in 1784 I believe on Elk river[.] it is for 5000 acres which I wish to turn into active property if you could assist me in the sale of it you would oblige me[;] all appears fair on Armstrong's book⁴¹

Should you find it convenient to [5] make me any remittance on the offers I shall have occasion for a sum of money on October next at Hillsborough and will be obliged by your assistance

We have had a sad bloody western Circuit for Capital convictions of which three are sent to eternity

With respect I am Dear Sir
Your Obd^t. Ser^t
Ed. Jones

John Gray Blount Esq.

William Pennock to John Gray Blount

Norfolk May 11th 1799

Mr. John G. Blount

Dear Sir

Your favor of 1st Inst with the inclosure came duly to hand & am much oblig'd by your Information respecting the [ship] Victory

I am sorry to find my Friends had advis'd Capt. Harding to stay as I do not think the risque of French Privateers great[,] our Ships of War keeping those which Rendevous at the Havana in good Order[.] I shall be oblig'd by your inquiring of Capt Brown wheather he heard Harding say what he was going to

⁴⁰ Hopkins was the referee in the battles over the remains of the Transylvania Land Company, and later was made the attorney for the settlement. See Willie to John Gray Blount, April 23, 1796; and William Blount to Thomas Hart, March 13, 1799, in this volume.

⁴¹ John Armstrong, the entry taker for western lands, whose office was at Hillsboro. The reference is probably to the state of the records of Blount's land, but may refer to Jones's title. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 50.

take in & what prospect there was of geting Freight Your next will I presume say your Lowestes terme for the Tar Freight for the ship which will enable me to speak to the point

I am your Ob^t Serv^t

W^m Pennock

Free

Addressed: M^r John G. Blount
Merchant
Washington
North Carolina

Christopher Deshon⁴² to John Gray Blount

Edenton May 14 1799

M^r John Blount,

Sir,

You, will please Inform M^r Blacklage, that I will take his Lumber; I must beg you will go on as fast as possable with the Spars of the Ship: the Riggin of the Ship will be round next week, and hope you have Engage^d the riggers to be ready: if you Can get hands to be a geting out the tops: I will thank you to do it; if you have any Ship Joiners in Washington who could, finish the Cabin will be glad if you will let me know; and Engage them to do it, I shall be over to Washington in about 10 or 12 days: and wish you in the mean time to Imploy as many hands to work on the Ship as can work to advantage in geting the Ship finnish^d[.] if you can not Borrow Iron to keep the Smiths at work I wish you to purchase as much as will keep them at work till I can get some round from Baltimore,—Accept the Respects

of your H Serv^t

Christop^r Deshon

Addressed: John.. Blount Esquire
Washington

⁴² A ship captain of the Blounts who apparently also owned one or more vessels and was at this time having one built under Blount's direction. Deshon to Blount, May 20, June 11, and August 26, 1799, in this volume; "Census 1790" in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 27.

*Christopher Deshon to John Gray Blount*Edenton May th20.. 1799

Mr J G Blount

D^r Sir

Your favour of the 17 May came to hand in due time, Contents note,^d I must Request of you to Engage Some hands, to work on the Cabin I think it would be wise to Engage the person at 2 \$ p^r day: as I suppose he may under Stand the Business better than the others, and at the same time, get the other hands to work under him; I am glad to here the Carpenters, is at work on the tops; as I wish all the work to go on as fast as possable; the plank or boards for the Cabin I wish to be well season^d; the Riggin will not be done till the middle of the week; when done I shall send it round with all possable dispatch & be at washing-ton my Self —

Accpt^t the Respects
of your very H Serv^t
Christop^h. Deshon

*Jabes Jones⁴³ to John Gray Blount*Washington 26th May 1799

Sir

I make the folowing Propersitions for you[r] Serious Consideration. as I failed in the Sale of Raising money yesterday Surficant to my Present wants it will Cause me Near two months more Stay. What Mighty advantage Can you anticepate to your Self. is it not in my Power to Bring other Sutes against you for the Interest on the Judgement also for a Promis of an additional Sum for the detention which now if Recovered will be about 700 Dol^{rs} more[?] but Sir if you will be Governed by the Same Principle I have Ever been through the Whole Sute you will feel a greater satisfaction of mind to meet me in a Reasonable accomedation in Which Case I Promise to Trouble you no more if Payments be made accordingly. VZ to [?] make me up 1000 Dol Cash; Now for the Remaing Sum

⁴³ An unidentified litigant. The proposal in this letter was probably not accepted. Jacob to John Gray Blount, January 14, 1800, in this volume.

I will take bils for the whole or a part alowing you to Send a Cargo of Stave, White Oak and Tar any time til the first Day of october Next to be Reciev^d at Boston at the going Price . if these Preposels will answer Pleas to Let me know this Evening

Y^{rs} &c

Jabes Jones

N. B. [If] the above be Complyed
with Sales on Execution
to be Stayed 5 Months and Satis-
fied if Paid

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r
Present

William Blount to Colonel Thomas Hart

Knoxville June 1st 1799

Dear Sir,⁴⁴

The Object of this Letter is to introduce to your acquaintance M^r. Richard Blount of South Hampton County of Virg^a. and his Friend M^r. Dawson also of Virg^a.

You will no [d]oubt suppose from the name that he is a relative of mine—I believe he is in a distant degree but in what degree I don't know — This however I know that his near Relatives are respectable and that both he and M^r. Dawson have been well recommended to me.—They visit Tennessee and Kentucky to judge upon their own View whether they shall become permanent Residents of either or not — I beg you to present me affectionately to your family and to believe me with sincere esteem

Your obdient Servant
W.^m. Blount

Col. Thomas Hart

⁴⁴ From the Hart Collection.

*William Pennock to John Gray Blount*Norfolk June 2.^d 1799

Mr John G. Blount

Dear Sir

Your favor of 16 Ulto is at hand[.] I am oblig'd by your enquiries respecting the Victory [&] find she [Sailed]* with the May Convoy

All the Americ[an]* armd Ships⁴⁵ have or will quit the West Indies by the 10th. of this Month the Time for which the People having Inlisted having expired but I think it more than probable that several of those now in will be sent out so soon as they are mand which will be in a little Time

I am yours with esteem

W^m Pennock

Norfolk June 2

Addressed: John G. Blount Esqr
Washington
North Carolina

*Mary Fitzgerald to John Gray & Thomas Blount*Mess^{rs}. Blount's Merchants, [June 3, 1799]

Washington North Carolina

Gentlemen:

I beg the Favor of you to forward the enclosed, to Mr. Charles Bargeau⁴⁶ with all possible Expedition — being much Surprised a few days ago, to receive a Letter from a Mr. Crew[,] Merchant of London, inform[in]g me that Mr. Bargeau had granted a fresh power of Attorney dated August 1st 1798 — empowering Mr. Crew to receive the Sum of 1500£ New South Sea Annuities &c [,] which Power, was not authenticated, untill the 2^d of April 1799, by a Mr. Nivison Notary of Public of the District of

* Hole in manuscript.

⁴⁵ Along with 365 private armed vessels in the West Indies there were four squadrons of United States naval vessels. McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, II, 431.

⁴⁶ For the background of this see Mary Fitzgerald to Blount, June 24, 1796, in this volume. The enclosure was probably the same as her letter of August 4, 1799 (below), as she sent a copy of this present letter to Blount again on August 4 at the same time that she wrote again to her uncle, indicating that she had not received a reply.

Norfolk Virginia State — As Mr. Bargeau in his last Letter to me Dated Dec^r. 1st. (97) mentions that he Shall commit his future Business to your Direction; & desires me to address my Letters [2] to him, to your Care; I think it somewhat odd, that no mention is made of your Names in this Business, or that Mr. B. Sh^d not have written to me himself, as he ever did before; I mean, by an Amanuensis, as he is I know Entirely deprived of Sight. As it is very much my *Wish*, that all the Money to which he is intitled, Sh^d come *Safe* to his Hands, I am desirous of acting with the utmost caution in this Business; & Sh^d be Particularly Obligated, if you would favor me with an early Answer to this, stating, what you know of my Uncle Mr. B. & his Family, with their present Residence; & that you will please to forward the Enclosed Letter to him, with all possible Expedition

In the Hope of an *Early* Answer to this, I remain,

Gentlemen,

Your Most Obed^t. Hum^{ble} Serv^t

Mary Fitzgerald.

Charles Street
St. James's Square
June 3^d: 1799 —

Addressed: Mess^{rs}. Blount's
Merchants
Washington
North Carolina

Amos Johnston to John Gray Blount

John Gray Blount Esquire
Dear Sir —

Elizabeth 4th. June 1799—

I have only a moment to write as the male is just setting out. I have been constantly imployed since I came to this County a runing the Outlines of the surveys, and finding the —————* quantity of acres Contained in the plat dead picosins⁴⁷ and meadows[.] I have sold some land and expect to Sell a great

* Manuscript torn.

⁴⁷ Pocosins are swamp lands and swamps.

quantity more at the same price it costs taking up[,] counting all costs — I am obliged to sell for that to prevent murmuring amongst the people about its being taken up at first in such large quantities as they are. if I had a sot a high price as I first intended to do I think they wold have pervented my runing at all — besides they have got so weded to the notion of its reverting to the State for the Taxes they will not give more at this time, for any of the land. please to write me what is best to do in the business as I am greatly at a loss and [2] Think it best to take advice, on the heads of the business, I think to try to be able to pay the tax on a large part of it, that is[,] all that is good or ever will be good[.] I find a great dea[1] of old patented land included, which I shall ascertain before my return, I have to take notes & security for what I sell as the wretches has not cash, nor Cattle or hogs, I think by the first week in July to sell to the amount of 5.00 Dollars or more, Doctor Morse is Sherriff [of Bladen] now and I cannot expect any quarters I am told about the taxes — The part, I wish to git Clear of I think I ha[d] * better deed to some person or ot[her]—time pervents more—I have been very sick a diu.

I am yours with Esteem &^c
A Johnston

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq
Washington

John Mayo⁴⁸ to John Gray Blount

Mr Jn^o G Blount

Shell Castle June 4th. 1799

Sir.

There has been Several People enquireing of me for Some more of the Oil Stone [Whetstone] lately, if you think proper to Send down 20, or 30^{lb} of them I expect they will Sell in a Short time, On the Terms the others Sold.

I want about three hundred feet of Juniper Plank of the following dimentions viz—

100 feet One In. thick—from 12 to 8 Inches wide—

* Manuscript torn.

⁴⁸ A Blount associate, apparently in merchandizing with John Wallace at Shell Castle. Later he was a deputy sheriff. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 376; John Wallace to Blount, March 24, May 22, 1800; and Mayo to Blount, December 16, 1802, in this volume.

100 d° $\frac{3}{4}$. d° d° d° d° —————

100 d° $\frac{1}{2}$. d° d° d° d° ————— as to — the lengths,

Imaterial but dont wish them Over 12 feet, as I understand you have plank Sawed for those who wants, if you Can Supply Me with that quantity of them dimentions & Send them down, with a bill of Costs I will pay you Imediately — I am Sir your Most Obed^t.

Jn° Mayo

Christopher Deshon to John Gray Blount

Edenton June 11th..1799

Mr. John Blount

D^r Sir/

I have receive^d letters by this Post from Baltimore; from my friends their Informing me their dissapointment will be great if the Ship Diamingo does not get a way by the first of July; there fore must beg you to Imploy as many hands as can work on the Ship so as to make all possable dispatch, I will thank you to Inform Cap^t Freeman, that I wish him to get his hands In- gage^d, to take the Ship round to Baltimore, I shall Ship, 2 or 3 hands here and bring Over with me; the Intercourse with S^t Domingo, is Exspected to be opend in a [2] bought a fortnight, the Treaty is made with Gen^l. Tousaint, & Doc^t Stevenson⁴⁹

Accept the Respects
of Your Very Hum
Sev^t
Christop^h Deshon

Addressed: John Blount Esquire

Mec^{ht}

Washington

⁴⁹ Edward Stevens for the United States, General Thomas Maitland for Britain, and Toussaint L'Ouverture signed a convention on June 13, 1799, reopening commerce with Santo Domingo, closed since the British expulsion by L'Ouverture. Rayford W. Logan, *The Diplomatic Relations of the United States with Haiti, 1776-1891* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1941), 97.

John B. Evans to John Gray and Thomas Blount

Philad.^a 13 June 1799

Mess^{rs}. John G. & Thomas Blount

Gentlemen,

I expect that you have heard of the failure of Doctor Hall, but least you should not I think it proper to give you the information — He has I believe assigned the most or all of his Property so that I think there is very [little] prospect of his paying the Notes to me which you have endorsed — Under these Circumstances it would be better for you to make some arrangement with the Doct^r. and pay —————* notes yourselves, so as to prevent the necessity of my proceeding against him, which will be attended with considerable Expence to you and cannot be of any service in recovering any thing from Doct^r. Hall.—

I am, with respect

Yr Ob^t Servant

John B. Evans

Addressed: Mess^{rs}. John G & Tho^s. Blount

Washington

N^o. Carolina

Will Orr⁵⁰ to John Gray Blount

Norfolk June 15th 1799

Dr Sir

I arrived here on the 13th Inst. & find the markets at this place for our produce very low for after trying *two* days to Sell the Tar @ 9/— I was obliged to Sell for 8/— p^r. bb^l. & then agree with the man to whom I sold to take of him what Canvass & Oznaburgs I wanted, as none of them would give all Cash at no price.

The Regulator I expect will Sail about Tuesday & will have fr^t. onboard Say to amount of 60 bls or upwards — The prices

* Hole in manuscript.

⁵⁰ A trusted Blount supercargo, agent, and merchant at John Gray's store in Washington, who acted for the firm in John Gray's absence. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 94; John Gray Blount Papers, *passim*, e.g., Orr to Blount, September 4, October 4, 1800, in this volume.

current at this place are as near as I can ascertain are as Stated below, I shall leave this place for Smithfield [Va.] as Soon as I get the Regulator away—

I am as usual
Your Most Obt.
Will Orr

Tar 8/ — dull
Pitch, & Turp^{tn}. no Sale
Rum 4th Proof 6/3
d^o — 3rd. d^o 5/9
d^o 2.d^o 5/3
Molasses. 3/9 @ [?] 4/—
Rosin no Sale
Varnish 1/—
Spirits 2/—

Free

Addressed: Mr. John G Blount.
Merchant
Washington

Will Orr to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

Norfolk 18th June 1799—

Dr. Sir

Inclosed you have my acc^t respecting, the pr^s. & the Sales of the Tar, the Regulator has been detained here two or three days longer than She ought to have been, but there was no possibility of preventing it. the Port is so very full of Vessells, that we did not get along side of a Wharf in three days after our Arrival, However by the detention I have procured a considerable freight which will make the voyage some better;—

Cap^{tn}. Sam.^l Smith has arrived here from the West Indies, & says he left Ben Blackledge about 25 days ago in St. Thomas's he was well, & making money & was highly esteemed there, he did not write home to any Person, my compliments to M^{rs} Blount & family & believe me

Yours
Will Orr

Addressed: John G Blount Esq^r.
 Merchant
 Washington

[enclosure]

John G Blount Esq^r.

To William Orr. Dr.

To Cash p ^d . for 3 bl ^s . Canvass @	18. \$	£16 — 4 — 0
Ditto 1 — d ^o . oznaburgs	1/3	8 — 17 — 6
Ditto for 1 box medicine for		
Mr. Rhodes —————		4 — 6

	V. m	£25. 6 . 0
	eq ^t . to Dolls —	84 — 33 ¹ / ₃
Ditto paid Capt. Williams		13 — 00
Balance due John G Blount		64 — 91 ² / ₃
		<hr/>
		\$ 162.25

Cr.

By Cash Rec ^d . for fr ^t 50 bl ^s Pork @ $\frac{3}{4}$	\$	\$ 37 — 50
Ditto Ditto 110 bl ^s Tar & Pitch @ $\frac{5}{8}$ ths		68 — 75
Ditto Ditto for 42 bl ^s Tar @ 87 — a		
	eq. ¹ to	56 — 00

\$ 162 — 25

By Contra balance \$ 64 — 91²/₃

E. Excepted

Norfolk June 18th 1799

Will Orr.

William Pennock to John Gray Blount

Norf^o. June 23^d. 1799

J G Blount Esq^r

Dear Sir

I have yours of 14th. Cur^t It is impossible my saying what the Tully would sell for unless she was here[.] Vessels are in demand but more for Freight than purchase princpaly to take Tob^o to London or Falmouth & a Market for which five Guineas

& five pC^t P[er] Hhd has been given but the Tob^o is large[.]
 There is no such thing as selling Naval stores here but I think
 it probable I could get the Tully a Freight to London of them[.]
 What would his lowest price be to London to Load at Washing-
 ton & what could the Tar be got for free of expence on board —
 Can you purchase a Cargo of Red & White Oak Staves of good
 Quality for Jamaica, liberty of two Ports,⁵¹ what [2] will be the
 price & the lowest Freight also some 22 In[ch] Shingles[.]
 Your Immediate Answer will much oblige

Your Ob^t Serv^t.
 W^m Pennock

I presume Tar can be had at a dollar
 & that the Owner of the Tully would
 take 12/5 d p Barl

Free

Addressed: John G Blount Esqr
 Washington
 North Carolina

James Iredell to John Gray Blount

Edenton July 3^d. 1799

Dear Sir

I hope you will excuse the liberty I take in requesting you to inform me whether you know of any of the lands in which Judge Wilson⁵² was interested having been already sold for taxes, or being likely to be so; and I should also esteem it as a favour if you would be pleased to tel me whether any of the Deeds were made out in Mr. Wilson's name or if any Deeds were executed to him after the Patents were taken out.—My desire of ascertaining whether Mr^s. Wilson is intituled to any Dower in those lands has induced me to make this request.—Mr. Bird Wilson⁵³ told me in Philadelphia he had written to Mr. Blackledge on the subject of the lands, but when I left Philadelphia he had received

⁵¹ The shipper (Pennock) or his agent or captain was to have a choice of two ports in Jamaica at which to sell the staves. This was a common arrangement. Letter Book, *passim*; Pennock to Blount, July 7, 1799, in this volume.

⁵² James Wilson fled to Edenton after his financial ruin and lived there with Iredell until his death on August 21, 1798. McRee, *Life of Iredell*, II, 435-536.

⁵³ A son of Judge Wilson by his first wife. McRee, *Life of Iredell*, II, 535.

no answer. If any of the lands in this state can be secured for this unfortunate Family, it would be a wonder[ful]* thing. If there are no Mortgages upon them, the Title belongs either to M^{rs}. Wilson and the children or to the latter of whom there are six, two or three (I believe three) of whom are under age.

M^{rs}. Iredell joins me in best respects to you and M^{rs}. Blount[;]
M^r Jacob Blount and his family are well

I am

Dear Sir

very respectfully,

Your obedient Servant

Ja. Iredell

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq
Washington.

William R Davie⁵⁴ to John Gray Blount

Raleigh July 4th. 1799

D Sir

The Secretary of the Navy having requested General Pinckney to direct the operation of the Gallies in the Southern States, he has ordered those in Georgia, to Sail the one from St. Marys, and the other from Savanah, as nearly as possible at the Same time so as to cross each other in the inland passage, and not to remain above twenty four hours in port — Similar directions are given to those in South Carolina, and he has requested my sentiments on the most advantageous mode of employing those in this State, so as best to protect the coasts and inlets, be constantly on duty, and not to lye idle in any one port——You will please

* Illegible.

⁵⁴ Davie (1756-1820) was born in England. After a military career for the American colonies in the Revolution he practiced law; was often in the General Assembly as a Federalist (1786-1798); and was especially active in establishing the University of North Carolina. As Governor (1798-1799) he engaged in the congenial task of directing anti-French defenses of the coasts during this part of the quasi-war of 1795-1800. Robinson, *Davie, passim*, especially 305-307.

to favor me as early as possible with your opinion on this subject and do me the favor to consider this letter, as at present confidential

I am with great respect
D Sir your most obt.
W.. R.. Davie

John G Blount Esqr.

Addressed: John G. Blount Esquire
Washington

William Pennock to John Gray Blount

Norfo. July 7th 1799

Mr. J. G. Blount

Dear Sir

Your favor of 28^h. Ulto is before me & observe the Owner of the Tully is verry Extravagant in his Ideas[.] I will give the prices you quote for the Staves provided the Owner of the Brig^t. will agree to take \$45^p Thousand Freight to two ports[,] that is[,] for me to have the Liberty if I choose it[.] I presume you have 1200 Staves to the 1000 it is upon this I calculate

In event of Loading the Brig^t or any other Vessel I wish $\frac{3}{4}$ ^{ths}. the Cargo Red Oak the Ballance white with no Heading it to be avoided[?]. The Freight asked for Shingles is more than they will bring[.] Inclosed is a Letter for Mr. Tho Blount which you will please forward as I do not [2] know his direction[.] I have some Money of his in my possession[.] I have receivd a most extraordinary Letter from Van Noorden he demands Freight for Lumber & Shingles which fell short[.] this is a New thing to me & on the Contrary I expect he will pay me for the Lumber for it is verry certain that it was never on board or that his Capt. did not deliver it

I am your Obt Serv^t
W^m Pennock

Addressed: Mr. J. G. Blount
Merchant
Washington

Free

Amos Johnston to John Gray Blount

John Gray Blount Esquire

Dear Sir/

Duplin County

Lewis Johnston's 15th. July 1799

I am on my return from Bladen County — on the Land business, which I have been constantly imployed a Surveying since the 16th. of May—I have run the out lines and sold to the different people to the ammount of £142.0.4 — a very little part I have in cash to the ammount of £23. 0 . 0 which about pays my expences on the rout—the Taxes will be to pay at Court the 1st Monday in Sept. which is 6/8 pr pool⁵⁵ [;] I will indeavour to pay my part at that time[.] the Land is nearly 1/3 on old Patents and about 1/3 picosins⁵⁶ — please to write me [——] * Trenton⁵⁷ Mail as soon as Possible you can as I may know how to act—— Doctor Morse the Sherriff is very hard & the leading people all against me——I want to go out the Last week after the Election, I wanted to go to see you before my return, if you think it necessary write me——

I am yours &c

A. Johnston

N B My Compt^s. to M^{rs}. Blount & M^r. R[ichard]. B[lackledge].

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire

Washington

*Samuel Davis⁵⁸ to John Gray Blount*Currituck [Currituck County] July 19th 1799

Dear Sir

From the Small acquaintance I have with you I take the Liberty to Call on you to do me a particular Favour if in your power, in which my Son is particularly interested, that is[,] inclosed is an affidavit, which is to go on to urope and it Requires the Governors Signiture and the Seal of the State to it, and as you are well acquainted with him you will do me a very grate

⁵⁵ Each member's expense in a joint undertaking.⁵⁶ Pocosins, i.e., swamps.

* Obscured by seal.

⁵⁷ A large town in Jones County, on Johnston's north-eastward route from Bladen County.⁵⁸ An unidentified citizen.

favour if you will inclose it to him by the post to where he Lives and git it done and Send it inclosed down to me in this place or to Doctor Adams or any of my nighbours[.] So that it may Come Safe to hand I will Ready pay all Expencies that may acrew thereon, pray Send it by the first oppertunity to this place after it is done. Some people tells me that the Signature of the note of Republic [notary public] will do as well. this I know you to be a propear Judge of and if you think it will git him to do the Requistes and Send it down to me — git which you think Best and I will pay all Expencies and Consider my Self under many obblagations to you[.] I am Sorry to Trouble you with this Business But I know you are well acquainted with the Like and in that Case I Shall not do wrong and it will Save me or my Son the Trouble of writing to the Governors Seat[.] if it is not in your power to Comply with the above please to inclose the affidavit back as above Directed [2] there is oppertunites Every day almost from your Town to this place. please to Excuse the Liberty I have taken and your favour Shall Ever be acknowledged by Sir your Humble servant

Samuel Davis

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr

Washington

Per Mr Jordan

*Grove Wright*⁵⁹ to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

New York July 22^d. 1799

Dear Sir,

Every thing has conspired to delay my giving you a satisfactory answer respecting your business here, in my former letter I gave you a sketch of M^r Churches frivolous objection to paying the loss of the Grampus, Since which I have seen Mess^{rs}. David Smith & Co. They told me they never heard of the loss of the Grampus until I came on, I told them I was authorized to settle the business & wished they would attend to it & give me an answer, they told me they would if I would leave the papers with them which I did, I Call'd on them Several days agreeable

⁵⁹ A merchant of Greenville with whom the Blounts did business. His name was not Grover as in Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 204-205. See Grove Wright to Blount, March 10, 1800, in this volume.

to their own appointments[.] They put me off & treated me with great neglect in the business, The last time I call'd I told them I woul[d] thank them for the papers, That They had treated me with great neglect——& very unlike a Gentleman & that I Should not trouble them again on the business, Took up my papers walked off & told them I should have the business Settled in some way or other — I plainly deearned that they had no thought of paying the [2] loss — I Mention the Conduct of those Gent^l. that you may see how little the business was attend too by them or the broker——I have Since Call'd on Col. Burr⁶⁰ handed him the paper & explained the business & gave him his fee (\$20) — He has Since given me his opinion that a recovery may be made, I here enclose you his statement where you will See that a Copy of the register is necessary, The deposition of the Crew which are named in the first protest made in order to make the second (protest) of equal validity with the first — The Court sets next weeke the Commission will then come out & the case put at issue, If it was not for the want of those papers the Suit might be determined next weeke—Great deal depends on your letter to Mr Rhodes⁶¹[.] Tho' the underwrite[rs] deny ever Seeing it, I believe We shall be able to establish that it was Shewn them——If you think proper you can say whether Mr. Rhodes —————* you wrote that that this insurns was not done when he first went on & whether you gave him any other order subsequent & C. & C. If not perhaps it will be well to have his deposition——I do not [t]hink of any thing more to say on the subject at this time——I Shall be glad to hear from you when time & business will [3] admit——

With respect I am
your Ob^t. Ser^t
G.. Wright

P.S. If you Should Know of any Vessel bound to this Port or any small vessel that Could be had on freight I will thank you to let Mr Dickinson Know of it & oblige

G. Wright

G. Wright Postmaster
Greenvill N°. Carolina

⁶⁰ Burr practiced law in New York City prior to his election as Vice-President. He had met William Blount while the latter was a Senator. *Dictionary of American Biography*, III, 315-316; Masterson, *William Blount*, 296.

⁶¹ William Rhodes, the ship captain. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 322, 571-573.

* Illegible.

Addressed: John G. Blount Esquire
Washington
N^o. Carolina

[*enclosure*]

Aaron Burr to Grove Wright

N York 21 July 99

Sir

Captain Fay in his protest, made at S^t. Iago, hath declared that he was bound to S^t. Bartholomew, which is made a pretence by the underwriters on the Grampus for refusing to pay the loss. I do not think that this circumstance can deprive the assured of their remedy. Mr Blount's letter to Mr Rhodes of 18 Sept^r is explanatory of the mistake and shews a full understanding between the parties as to the ostensible and real destination of the Vessel, and the sincerity of the transaction is also testified by the agreement between the Captain and Mr. B — The letter *having been shewn to the underwriters before the policy was made*, does in my mind remove the objection arising from the Variance between the policy and the protest.

The assured must send to me an official [2] Copy of the register of the Grampus. A commission will issue from our Sup. Court to take testimony in N^o. Carolina & will be accompanied by further instructions as to the testimony which may be deemed requisite. The explanations to be given by the Captain & proof of his agreement for the Voyage with Mr Blount are in addition to the register all which now appear necessary —

I am Sir very respectfully
Y^r obt Serv^t
A. Burr

Grov Wright Esq^r

Addressed: Grove Wright Esq^r
Greenwich Pt N^o 101

David Clark⁶² to John Gray Blount

Dear Sir

Williamston⁶³ 26th. July 1799

I have made inquiry of the makers of Turpentine in the Neighbourhood of Hogston,⁶⁴ to know what quantity they could furnish me by the time limited by you—I find it out of my power to procure enough to make an object of Shipping to Liverpool in time for your Brig——

I should have wrote you on Tuesday by Post, but was not fully informed with respect to the Turpentine——

I am with Respect

Yr. ob^t Serv^t

David Clark

John G. Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John G. Blount. Esq^r.
Washington

*Edward Jones to John Gray Blount*Raleigh Aug^t 2^d 1799——

Dear Sir

Yours in reply to mine from fayette is satisfactory, it will *serve me very much* if you can comply with my request therein noticed at Hillsborough Court.

I[t] appears by Col: Glasgows records that grants have issued on Mr John Hills['] military service warrants in the name of Major Reading Blount,⁶⁵ Mr Hill my neighbour has applied to me to examine the business and to procure redress. he is not desirous of litigation or that rumour should be disturbed on the subject, as I have only the pleasure of a slight acquaintance with the Major I beg you to write to him on the subject[.] Hill was in the army with him and it *Specially* appears and Glasgow assured

⁶² Unidentified except as a political lieutenant of Thomas Blount. Thomas to John Gray Blount, August 7, 1800, in this volume.

⁶³ County seat of Martin County.

⁶⁴ A town in Martin County, now called Hamilton, located on the Roanoke River northwest of Williamston. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, map opposite 64.

⁶⁵ This letter is an example of what the commissioners who had been appointed to investigate the land frauds of 1798 called "the most flagrant, and perhaps the most numerous branch of these frauds . . .," namely "the forging of assignments from the soldiers to some other person, to whom, or to the assignees of whom, grants have accordingly issued." Report of the Commissioners, in Blount Papers.

me the Major had drawn them as [2] *Heir* to Hill—I think it would be well to prevent a noise being made about it, Hill who is a good natured honorable man will accept of a reasonable consideration through my interference, pray communicate this to the Major and let me hear from him at this place by the 12th. Inst. as the Court of patents then sits, and an examination of all Glasgows business will be a the [*sic*] Chief Subject of, Judicial interference

with respect I am Dear Sir

Your ob Sert.

Ed: Jones

J G Blount esq

P. S. — read the enclosed & forward it without loss of time to Mr Blackledge

Addressed: John Gray Blount esqr.

Washington

Joseph Masters⁶⁶ to John Gray Blount

Mattamuskeet August 3rd. 1799—

Dear Sir,

I rec^d. yours the other day P[er]. B. Weston and as I fail'd to go to Long Shoal⁶⁷ I have wrote to Mr. Hallowell agreeably to your Letter and sent it by John Gibbs; I have seen Mr. Jackson who says you will make 150 or 200 Barrels Corn on your Lake plantation if no disaster takes place

Our Crops are uncommonly likely I suppose better than they have ever been before — I have nothing worthy your information therefore remain

yours at command,

Joseph Masters

John G Blount Esqr.

Addressed: John G Blount Esqr—

Washington

B. Weston

⁶⁶ Unidentified.

⁶⁷ Long Shoal Point, on the extreme southeastern coast of Dare (then Tyrrell) County. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, map opposite 64.

John Allen⁶⁸ to John Gray Blount

Dr. Sir

on viewing Mr. Shannons plott it Strikes me that the Canal from Roanoke River to Pamlico Can be made Navigable with less than half the Sum Through Smythwicks Cr. and Bonners Cr. — . — than that Through Tranters & Cannahoe Creeks.⁶⁹ . . from the head of Smythwicks to Bonners Creek is only 6 mile & that through a flatt Pocosan. with a number of Swamps to Supply water in the Raney Season — please View the Plan and Satisfy your Self — if you Think with me please Say nothing about it Till Mr. Bonner gets his deed from Cooke —

I am Sir your Obed^t Serv^t.

J^o Allen

J. G. Blount Esq^r.

August 3^d — 99 —

please make any notes on the plan you may think Necessary—

Addressed: John G. Blount Esquire
Washington

Mary Fitzgerald to Charles Bargeau⁷⁰

Charles Street

St. James's Square

August 4th: (99)

Dear Uncle:

I should have answered your Letter of Dec^r. 1st: 1797 from Washington, but was prevented by the Stocks remaining so low, which have since risen; & likewise by the Expectation, of hearing from you again. Understanding by your Letter from Washington, that you Sh^d commit all your future Business to the Direction of Mess^{rs}. Blounts — am Surprised to find, that a fresh power of Attorney dated August 1st: 1798 has been granted, to Mr. Crew of London Merchant, (& not authenticated, un-

⁶⁸ For Allen see Thomas to John Gray Blount, March 14, 1796, n.78, in this volume. Blount had long been interested in canals and was a member of the Roanoke and Pungo Canal Company, chartered by the General Assembly in 1796. *Laws of North Carolina* [1796], 17-21. See also John Allen to Blount, November 28, 1796, in this volume.

⁶⁹ Farther east rather than upstream, on both rivers. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, map opposite 64.

⁷⁰ For the Fitzgerald-Bargeau matter see Mary Fitzgerald to Blount, June 24, 1796, and subsequent letters in this volume.

till the 12th: of April 1799 by a Mr. Nivison Notary of Public of the district of Norfolk Virginia State,) empowering Mr. Crews to receive the sum of 1500 £ New South Sea Annuities &c[.] As it is my Wish, that you should receive all the Money Safe, to which you are Entitled; I beg to hear from you by the earliest opportunity, of your present Situation, & that of your Family, by an Answer to this, with your Signature, properly Authenticated — As the [2] power of Attorney, which was Sent to Mr. Crew, is only a Copy — I will then send such powers, as may be Necessary to Enable you to Receive the Money, to which you are entitled.

I likewise Wish, as I mentioned in my last Letter, to be made Acquainted with the Number of your Children *Now living*, their Ages, Situations in Life, & Hand writing; as in case of your Decease before this Business is Settled, it may be to their Advantage — In Expectation of an *early* Answer to this Letter, & with my best Wishes for your Own, & Familys Welfare, I remain

Dear Uncle
Your Affectionate Niece
Mary Fitzgerald.

Addressed: Mr. Charles Bargeau
To the Care of Mess^{rs} Blount
Merchants, Washington,
North America

Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount

Princeton August 8th. 1799

Dr. Sir

Inclosed you have two letters for Mr. Benj^a. Blackledge be so good as to forward them by the first Opertunitys that Sails for the different ports as they are directed[.] if you have any late acc^{ts}. of B. Blackledge please to inform me the particulars, I have about four thousand dollars worth of dry goods on hand principally consisting of fine & Coarse Cloths, Casemears, Merselles for Vest shapes[.] veveretts,⁷¹ Calicoes, Shawls & handkerchiefs with a little pewter, Hard ware &c. and a good assort-

⁷¹ A kind of velvet having a cotton base.

ment of mens fine hatts[,] Cost from two to Six dollars apeice, some childrens hatts, indeed the goods is pretty well assorted & wants nothing but linnens Negroe Cottons & Blanketts to make them a good assortment for the fall[.] I am in want of a good vessell from 100 to 150 Tuns of an easy draft of water that will do to carry lum[ber] * from this country to the West Indies[.] If you think I can git one in Washington for goods I will Send you an Invoice so that you can see what kind of goods I have for Sale and the Cost, the Vessell I want must be fitted for Sea, pleas to inform me on the receipt of this, if it would be possiable for me to get a good Vessell for my goods with you, and you will Oblige

Y^r. Hum^e Serv^t
B. Coakley

Addressed: John G Blount Esquire
Merch^t.
Washington

Free

Willie Blount to Thomas Hart

Knoxville August 9th 1799

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 2nd instant addressed to my brother William was received yesterday and is now before me — I arrived at this place a few days past from New York, was told by my brother that M^r William Hart had been here in my absence authorized by you to go into the division of the Powell's Valley lands⁷² — had I been at home nothing could have been done in the division as M^r Hogg's attorney was not here — He is not here now, neither do I know whether he has appointed any person to transact that business in his behalf[.] until M^r Hogg's attorney does arrive I suppose it will be unnecessary for yours to come on — you may rely on receiving the earliest information of his arrival after he comes to this place, and I shall at all times hold myself in readiness to transact the business on the part of

* Hole in manuscript.

⁷² Another of the many attempts to settle the Transylvania Company members' land claims. See Blount to John Salter, August 8, 1797; William Blount to Thomas Hart, March 13, 1799; and Edward Jones to Blount, May 6, 1799, in this volume.

the representatives of Colonel Salter — My brother sister and family are in good health and desire to be presented to yourself and good family in a particular manner — I am with perfect respect and esteem,

Your Ob^t Servant
Willie Blount
to
Col. Tho^s. Hart

Will Orr to John Gray Blount

Smithfield [Virginia] Aug^t. 9th. 99

Dr. Sir

When I last wrote you I expected to have been at home about this time, but I have unfortunately had a very severe attack of the Abilious Fever. which has prevented it — but am now on the mend & intend as soon as I posibly can to set out for home —

I am in Want of some Money say about 35 to 40 \$ and cannot well leave this place before I can raise that sum, as I have to pay my Doct^{rs}. Bill, & some money to advance to my attorney, will you be so obliging if in [2] your power to forward me that sum, if you have any money due you in Norfolk a Bill on any Person there will answer, if you have not perhaps Mr. Rhodes, Ross, Atkinson or some other of the merchants may have & of whom you may procure a Bill for that sum — if you cannot procure a Bill or forward the money by any immediate conveyance to Norfolk or Suffolk, please inform me as soon as possible, so that I may not remain here any longer on expenses. — as it will be impossible [3] for me to have my business finished at this time — please give my Compliments to M^{rs}. Blount & the family & believe me with respect

Yours &c.
Will Orr

Addressed: John G. Blount esq^r.
Washington
N. Carolina

*Jonathan Price to John Gray Blount*Nixonton 13th August 1799

Dear Sir

Yours of 2^d Instant came to hand and am Sorry to tell you that I am not Elected — my vote was 318 — John Lane 321 — Hunter 329 — John Shaw⁷³ 341 — Baliley 23 [a]head of Freshwater⁷⁴ in the Senate. so that we lost our Election below except Shaw — Intarely owin to a voilent Storm which came on about 3 O clock and Lasted till near night — It being so dark that the Candidates agreed to have the pole closed after which time the cloud cleared away and many came in and offered their votes before sun set which were Refused and at Least 30 more were on their way who were prevented by the Storm — Sufficient without doubt to have elected all below — is not these votes which were offered sufficient ground to dispute the Election — I intend to try — tis heard we should Loose the Court by such an acedent⁷⁵ — [2]

The Sheriff has summond me to appear at Hillsborough in October in a Writ vs [John] Strother and myself who says there must go out an Allies [Alias] against Strothers on the return⁷⁶ — I have heard nothing like an execution against our Bodies⁷⁷ I hope we may be prepared to meet it when it comes, I shall go up to Raleigh to see them out and I hope the Almighty may help to damn some of them —

It gives me great pain to hear what you relate of the death of our friend Rhode — we are all in helth at presint — only I have a Fellon⁷⁸ on my finger from the pain of which I have not slept day nor nights in a week

Jonathan Price

Addressed: John Gray Blount
Washington

⁷³ Shaw represented Pasquotank in the House of Commons in 1798 and 1799. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 340.

⁷⁴ Bailey Jackson was a Pasquotank representative in the House of Commons, 1795 through 1798, and in the North Carolina Senate, 1799 through 1802. Thaddeus Freshwater was a Pasquotank member of the House of Commons in 1791 and in the State Senate in 1805, 1810, and 1811. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 340.

⁷⁵ "heard . . . acedent." This writing is clear but the meaning is obscure. Price may have meant to say that it was hard luck to lose the election count by such an accident or he might have meant it was rumored his faction was going to lose control of the county court. Justices of the peace, who made up the county court, were appointed by the governor upon the recommendation of the legislature, which probably followed local representatives' nominations. Guion Griffis Johnson, *Ante-bellum North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1937), 616-620.

⁷⁶ "Alias . . . return," i.e., a second writ must issue against Strother, the first not being served. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 95.

⁷⁷ An action to imprison. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 222.

⁷⁸ Felon. A deep-seated infection.

*Thomas Blount to John Haywood*Tarb°. 17th Aug^t 1799Dear Sir,⁷⁹

I expect J.G.B here tomorrow on his way to the Court of Patents⁸⁰ — he intended to have arrived at Raleigh early this week, but has been deprived of the power of leaving home first by the yellow, or some other malignant fever, & afterwards by various occurrences in his Business among which may be reckoned the Sale of one of his vessels — a thing he much desired — I hope he will arrive in due time . I should have attended without him if my attendance could have [been] * useful but the fact is that [to this] * day I know nothing about [the la]nd * Business — The election here terminated according to [2] the wish you was pleased to express to me—of 380 votes I obtained 275⁸¹— the Members of the Commons are O['] Bryan & Hilliard⁸² — A's poll was very short but He bore his disappointment like a Philosopher⁸³ — I shall come up with J G B if he should think my presence in the smallest degree necessary — Otherwise I shall go to Warren on Tuesday next — M^{rs}. Blount joins in Compliments to M^{rs}. Haywood

I am

as ever

Your f[riend] *

Tho Blount

Addressed: John Haywood, Esq^r
 Raleigh
 Mr Schenck

⁷⁹ From the Heywood Collection.

⁸⁰ The court set up to annul the fraudulent land grants and to punish the offenders, among whom the Blounts were allegedly included. The court did not meet as scheduled. Robinson, *Davie*, 311-312.

* Manuscript torn and blurred.

⁸¹ Thomas was elected to the North Carolina Senate from Edgecombe County. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 146. He was not in the 1798 legislature as Wheeler says. Thomas to John Gray Blount, December 6, 1798, in this volume.

⁸² Lawrence O'Bryan served only this term, but Jeremiah Hilliard had served in 1793 and 1794 and was re-elected from 1799 to 1804. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 146.

⁸³ "A" was possibly Adam John Haywood, a House of Commons member from Edgecombe County in 1798 who may have been defeated for re-election. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 146.

*William Shannon to John Gray Blount*Philad^a Aug^t 18. 99.

D Sir/

I have wrote you several letters, and it is a long time since I had the pleasure of any from you — Your last to me is dated 18th Feb^y. ulto. respecting a contract for Shingles, which as I informed you at that time was very low, and the prospects of rising very small — At this moment, notwithstanding there are few buildings erecting in the City, three feet good Cedar Shingles will bring 20 dollars rough, and I believe the N. Carolina is esteemed the best. Cypress will not bring so much by 1/3

I am of Opinion that were you to enter on the Shingle making business [2] and take a yard in this place either in partnership, or employ a steady person to superintend it, a valuable purpose might be effected, — the adjoining country for near or quite 50 Miles are dividing their plantations, and erecting new buildings, to cover which they have nothing but the shingles bought here — many are also wanted to repair the old ones, and the Cedar of this State and New Jersey, especially the better kind, must be nearly exhausted — Great use is also made of Cedar as far as twenty miles from the City for post & rail fence, in this way much is consumed — if you had a yard here you could avail yourself of the advantages of the Market which are very various [3] and save the enormous difference there is between wholesale and retail prices — this is generally 100. P Ct. — I even think it possible that Cedar or Cypress rails could be furnished at the prices they bear say 10.dollars P. Hundred[,] Rough Shingles at this time of the best quality would sell by the load or Cargo at 16 or 17 doll.

D Sir: Be so obliging to collect my several notes written to you, and ———*ly answer the requests; particularly my last respecting the taxes on the Swamp; and do not let them be sold without my knowledge — If you have not wrote before this arrives, I beg you will by first Post

Your Oblig^d. Hb^e Serv^tW^m Shannon

Addressed: John G. Blount Esquire
Washington
North Carolina

Mail

* Obscured by seal.

*Christopher Deshon to John Gray Blount*Baltimore Aug^t 26. 1799

Dear Sir,

Yours of the 10, Curat^t. is at hand Contents noted, you observe that mine of the 4 of Aug^t from Edenton Came to hand with out the Money Inclosed, as advise^d in the letter, I left the letter when I came a way from Edenton with Mr Collins unseald, and desired him to Inclose, the Money which I left with him for the purpose 21\$/ the Mistake in M^cDonnald is Simply this, the whole Am^t of his acc^t 113..2..9 the freight of Cordige from Edenton p^d for him 15/

12 lbs of lead Returned him	_____	12)
17 lbs of d ^o ..		17)
2 .. 4 .. 0 .	_____	

his owne acc^t Stands thus, but, the 2 .. 4 is not deducte^d in your acc^t., The pilotage to the Bar was not paid by Cap^t Freeman therefore must beg you will pay it and Draw on Mr Millin, at Edenton for the Am^t and allso Please pay the am^t of Negro hire and, Chart of Price; the acc^t. will be p^d you By [2] Mr Millin, as I left word with him to that Efect the ——* Caton Arive^d Safe here, in 5 days after leaveing your Bar, I have ben obleage to put hooks in forward and aft, the Stern was not well Secured — the Exspence, of the Ship here, Exclusive, of Coppering will be at least 2000\$ [.] vessels is on the fall at this place, Small vessels in particular, freight of Tobacco, to Bremin, is about five pound thirty the 1000 lb — Please make my best Respect to M^{rs}. Blount and Fammily —

and am D^r Sir with
Esteeme Your Very Hum^e
Serv^t
Christop^r. Deshon

Addressed: John G. Blount Esquire
Washington
North Carolina

* Illegible.

Samuel Davis to John Gray Blount

Dear Sir,

Currituck August 31^t 1799

I Received yours in which you promised to Comply with my Request ⁸⁴ — and if it has Been Convenient for you So to do you will much oblige me in Sending it inclosed by Mr Forman—and write me what the Expence is and I will Send it by the first Safe oppertunity—I Should not be in a horry about it but I want to Send it out this Fall—and if I dont git it Soon I Shall miss the oppertunity—your favor will Veary much oblige your Humble servant

Samuel Davis

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr
Washington
per Mr Forman

*William Polk to John Gray Blount*Raleigh Sept. 14th. 1799

Dear Sir,

Will it be in your power to furnish me with the articles enumerated at the foot hereof & to have them conveyed by some means to this place either by the way of Tarborough or Newbern —The latter on account of the back Country Waggon coming through this place will be the best. An answer by the return of the first Mail will be expected.

I am with respect
your most ob^t.
Servant.
Will. Polk

30 Gallons of Old Jamaica Rum
50 w. of Coffee
50 w. of Loaf Sugar
2 w. of best Imperial Tea
1½ doz quart Decanters best double Flint

⁸⁴ See Davis to Blount, July 19, 1799, in this volume.

2 doz 1½ pint Tumblers

2 doz Wine Glasses

} Cut Glass would be preferred

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarb°. 13th Octo. 1799

Dear Sir,

I got up safe on Friday, found all well & by means of a Calomel pill & c. have made myself almost so—I find I can't start before Sunday therefore if Joe can be here by Saturday it will do — by the Letter I left I required him to be here by the 14th please inform him by post, if no opp.^t offers before, that Saturday will do — If I get not him I know not who I shall get — & if the information goes by post he will not have a minute to spare — I put into the post office with this a Letter from W. Blount brought here the day before yesterday—Is our Mama paid what we stipulated to pay her, & if she is not, what is the reason & why do we not pay her? When I saw her present Husband ⁸⁵ he told me she was not—Comp^{ts}. to all—

Yours &c

Tho. Blount

Addressed: M^r John G. Blount
Washington

Post.

⁸⁵ Jacob Blount, Sr.'s third wife, Mrs. Mary Adams, apparently remarried after his death in 1789. She was John Gray's and Thomas's stepmother. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xvii; H. J. Neill to Blount, July 16, 1798, in this volume.

*John B. Evans to John Gray and Thomas Blount*Philad^a. 21. October 1799Mess^{rs}. John G & Thomas Blount

Gentlemen,

You no doubt have frequently heard of the situation of Dr. Hall, & of course are aware of the probability of your being obliged to pay his notes that you passed to me last fall ⁸⁶ — I have it in contemplation to ship Cypress $\frac{7}{8}$ Inch Boards to the West Indies to the Value of 5 or 6000 Dollars; one half of which must be ready to deliver on a navigable Water for a Vessel drawing 10 or 12 feet, in all the month of March Next — perhaps it might suit you to furnish them & receive in Discount thereof Dr. Hall's Notes, if so, be pleased as soon as possible to say at what price you will furnish them p M feet & when & where—the lengths will be abo^t. 10 feet & the widths from 11 to 14 Inches—

I am very Respectfully

Yr. Ob Servant

John B. Evans

Free

Addressed: Mess^{rs}. John G. & Tho^s. Blount

Merchants

Washington

N^o. Carolina*H. Potter to John Gray Blount*Raleigh, 28th. October 1799

D. Sir

Notwithstanding all the opposition which I cou'd possibly set up, and the legal advantages which I sought in your defence, the Plaintiffs at our last Court, obtained Judgments ag^t you & Lytle⁸⁷ as bail for Col^o. [Abishai] Thomas.⁸⁸

Thomas's confinement in the Philadelphia Gaol I pleaded, as well as many other things, but to no purpose.

⁸⁶ See Evans to Blount, June 13, 1799, in this volume.

⁸⁷ William Lytle held military land warrants and speculated with the Blounts and their agent Abishai Thomas. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 534-536.

⁸⁸ See Henry Potter to Blount, March 25, 1799, in this volume.

Supposing you wou'd be willing to know the event, I thought proper to give you this information. Whether the Executions will be sent I do not know.

You are now without remedy, unless Thomas will come forward & enjoin the Proceedings or pay the money.

With much respect

I am Y^{rs}. & c.

H. Potter

Addressed: Mr John G Blount
Washington
N^o. Carolina

Mail.

Benjamin Atkinson to John Gray Blount

Bensborough 29th Oct. 1799

Mr. John G. Blount

Dear Sir it has been sometime Since I had the happiness to hear from you. I hope you and your family has escaped the Fever—I am in Want of a Vessel to load a provision cargo to the West Indies Burthen 250 to 1000 Bb^s to be Ready at Washington to take in first Week in December & to Sail by the 15th[,] if [you] will be so obligeing as to mention this to those who own Vessels and can procure a good Vessel at Customary Freight you will much oblige D^r Sir

Your Most ob^t

Ben. Atkinson

P S. Mr. Vanorden & myself
has talked of one of his
but I have heard nothing
lately from him lately and fear he has given it out

*Benjamin Williams⁸⁹ to John Gray Blount*Raleigh Novem. 3^d. 99

Dear Sir

The other Day when Gen^l. Smith⁹⁰ was up he mentioned the making me a Deed to the land purchased of him for you & urged that I would be prepared by the Assembly to receive it & give up his Bond, be so good as [to] think about the Business & if you deem it proper please to send up the Bond with your Instructions & a blank Deed to the end that the Business may be closed.

Should not Gen^l. Davie return to the State & ressume the Functions of Gov^r.⁹¹ I suppose the Assembly then will [see?]* great canvassing for that appointment, understanding as I do that Gen^l. Smith & Col. Martin⁹² are Candidates as well as your Most Ob^t. & perhaps by the Day many more may appear on the List: as my Name has been on Former Occasions held up, it is my intention it shall be now notwithstanding the great Gen^l Davie may claim a right to the appointment, for I am not clear that his Interest the present year is eaqual to the last, remembering that it was by his Friends givin out *this was an Epoch at which his Services could not be* [2] *dispensed with as Gov^r.*; yet we find 18,000 \$, has induced him to leave the Government, of this State to be exercised by the Speaker of the Senate & the Country left to want his Services.

What support I may [receive?] [from New Bern?][†] Dis^t. I am not able to hear. _____[†] Wilmington & Fayette I find _____[†] assur _____[†] am well assured of a part of Hillsb^o. as well as getting Votes from Morgan & Salisbury; Halifax and Edenton I dont hazzard an opinion about, but can conceive as well grounded

⁸⁹ Williams (1751-1814) was a very active politician. He served in the Provincial Congresses and Revolutionary Army and was a House of Commons member in 1779, 1785, and 1789, and a State Senator in 1781, 1784, 1786, 1788, and 1809. He was also a Representative in Congress (1793-1795) and was Governor of North Carolina from 1799 to 1802 and 1807 to 1808. He was first called nonpartisan, but was later considered a Republican. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1818-1819; Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 191, n.6.

⁹⁰ For Benjamin Smith see David Allison to Blount, January 7, 1796, in this volume.

⁹¹ William R. Davie was appointed in January, 1799, one of the three commissioners sent by President Adams to settle the disagreements between the United States and France. The Speaker of the Senate served as Governor in his absence until Benjamin Williams was elected at the November, 1799, meeting of the Assembly. Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, II, 159; Robinson, *Davie*, 319-321; Richard D. Spaight to Blount, February 15, 1800, n.23, in this volume.

* Illegible.

⁹² Probably Alexander Martin (1740-1807), Governor of North Carolina 1782-1784 and 1789-1792 and U. S. Senator from that State 1793-1799. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1267.

[†] Obliterated.

Reason (& should not a Man from one of those Districts hold a poll) why either Smith or Martin should be preferred to me; a few active Friends at this Time no doubt would insure my Election—Pray let me hear from you by return of this Mail & be assured that I am with much Esteem yours

B Williams

Samuel Davis to John Gray Blount

Dear Sir

Currituck November 16th 1799.

I am Sorry to be thus Troublesom to you I am afraid I Shall ware out your patiance, but I hope you will not think much of the Business for if I had thought it would have been attended with So much difficulty I would not have put you to the Trouble⁹³. I had Reather a hierd an Express to have went to the Governor, and then I Should been able to have Sent it out this fall but now have mised the oppertunity I Requested doctor Adams to mention the matter to you when you was in Currituck and he Sais you tould him that you gave it to a Mr Shinks as well as I Remember to git the Governors Seal to it . . . now Sir if you will be So obliging as to write to that man and git it again for me I will be under any obblagation to you—you Shall think proper. I am afraid it is Lost. I gave Mr Harris a Considerable Sum to draw it and if it be Lost I cannot form another without the Same Expense. if you will be So Kind as to git the Governors Seal to it I will pay all Expence Let it be what it will . . besides Shall think my Self under many obblagations to you for the Same. I wish to git it as Soon as possable. Your favour will much oblige Sir

Your most Obdt Servant
Samuel Davis

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr
Washington
per Mr Fournon [?]

⁹³ An affidavit to be sent to the Governor for his signature. See Samuel Davis to Blount, July 19, and August 31, 1799, in this volume.



Benjamin Williams (1751-1814), of Moore County, Governor of North Carolina, 1799-1802, 1807-1808. Photograph from the files of the State Department of Archives and History.



James Armstrong⁹⁴ to John Gray Blount

November 18th 1799

Mr. Blount Sir——

I have lately got in the notion of Seling some of My Land In the Western Country as I have an inclination to purchase Land neare about heare, and Cannot do so without Seling first; and I have thought it necessary to give you the offer of it as you are acquainted with the vallou of Land thare; Sir I will tell you how much I wish to sell thar 1200 Acres Sittuate,^d in Davidson County and on Stones River between Stuarde & Farmers Creek,⁹⁵ My price is one Dollar pr acre to be paid at two payments, the First payment If you think proper to purchase will be If convenient A Negro Girl betwene Fifteen and Twenty Years of Age and Three Hundred Dollars; and the Balance In Six Months, I think you cannot say anything against the price of my Land as it Is Land of the best quallity and [in]* the hart of the Settlement[.] If you wish to perchase Land at all In that country I think you will come to my proposals If not I wish If you please you would wright me what you would give as I wish to Sell and rather Sell to some person about heare than have to go to any other place to do It——

No More only remain with due Respect your &c
November the 18th 1799——

James Armstrong

Mr. John G. Blount
Addressed: John G. Blount Esqu^r.
Washington

⁹⁴ Unidentified. Possibly a relative of the land office officials John and Martin Armstrong. Edward Jones to Blount, May 6, 1799, n.41; and Joseph Martin to Blount, November 26, 1796, n.243, in this volume.

⁹⁵ In central Tennessee.

* Hole in manuscript.

[Willie Blount] to John Gray Blount

Nash[ville]* Dec^r. 2nd 1799

Dear Sir,

The Assessors of the direct tax⁹⁶ in this District have in some Counties returned your lands and in others they have not — In the County of Sumner they have returned as much as amounts to upwards of one hundred dollars — I do not know the amount in the Counties of Montgomery and Robertson but I know the assessors have returned some in each — in this County Davidson there is no return — notwithstanding the incompleteness of the return I am told that the tax must be paid on such lands as have been returned by the assessors — it may be that as the Commis[sioners]† of the tax in this state closed the business and forwarded their proceedings before the commissioners in your State closed theirs that ours cannot receive returns from you of your property — I would wish to be informed of your returns there — when I know the exact amount of the tax on such quantity as has been returned here will inform you—Mess^{rs}. John & W^m. Donelson are anxious to have a settlement made with them for locating lands &c. their desire on that head I promised to write you and make known to them your answer——

What think you of having your lands improved by tenants, perhaps it would be the means of paying the taxes in future—I have only time as the bearer waits to add compliments to your good family—I am &c.

[Signature removed]

J. G. Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John Gray Blount, Esq^r.

Washington

North Carolina

By Mr. Jas Dupree

to the care of

Grove Wright Esq^r.

Greenville N. C.

* Obscured by seal.

⁹⁶ A tax passed by Congress to raise money for war, measures against France. See Thomas to John Gray Blount, March 29, 1798, n.46, in this volume.

† Torn.

John B. Evans to John Gray and Thomas Blount [with enclosure]

Philad^a. December 2^d. 1799

Mess^{rs}. John G. & Thomas Blount

Gentlemen,

Refering to my last Letter of 6th Ult^o. I have now only to enclose you a Notice from Peter Lohra of the protest of—Dr. Hall's three Notes guaranty'd by you⁹⁷ —not having heard from you in answer to my last I shall have Suits bro^t. returnable to the December Term—

I am respectfully

Yr. Ob^t Servant

John B. Evans

Addressed: John G. & Thomas Blount
Merchants
Washington
N^o Carolina

[enclosure]

Philadelphia. Nov 30 1799.

J Hall's three Notes to John B. Evans guaranteed by you for Dollars 833. 33 each
being due and unpaid at the BANK of PENNSYLVANIA,
is delivered to me for Protest.

PETER LOHRA,

Notary Public, No. 54,

South Second Street.

Addressed: Mess^{rs}. John G & Tho. Blount

⁹⁷ See Evans to Blount, June 13, October 21, 1799, in this volume.

William Blount to Colonel Thomas Hart

Knoxville Decr. 5th 1799

Dear Sir,⁹⁸

Your letter of the 1st Nov^r. addressed to my Brother Willie was opened by me he being absent on Business at Nashville and having left me a substitute power [of attorney?]* for the Representatives of Salter— [_____] * Mr. Lewis will hand you a Copy of the articles of Division⁹⁹ as agreed to and signed by the Attorneys of the respective parties with which I think you will be pleased

You will observe Mr. Lewis gave Choice of Halves of the Lots B & M, the reason he did so was because he had made himself acquainted with the Value of both and believed the giving Choice he gave no advantage to those taking of it and it appeared necessary he should make such an offer in Order to effect a Division as much as possible to your advantage—For myself I know only from Information the quality of no one of the lots therefore cannot say whether any advantage has been gained by either party in the Division but so far as I can collect from different [2] Opinions of persons who say they are acquainted with the quality of the lots I suppose it a very equitable one—

I am however induced to believe that an exchange could be made between you and the Representatives of Salter advantageous to both, the one I mean is for you to give [_____] * the lot T in exchange for their $\frac{1}{4}$ of Lot M [_____] * their Half of Lot G—you will no doubt say [_____] * this is giving great odds! True in Acres [_____] * you have the advantage in quality of [_____] * in the $\frac{1}{4}$ of Lot M & besides if I am not [mis]* taken it renders your half of Lot M [more]* valuable to you than it otherwise would be [_____] * Mr. Lewis can inform you more fully upon this Subject—I beg you to believe that I am not anxious upon this subject and I pledge you my Word that I do not wish it to take place unless I believed it would be advantageous to both Parties—I wish and shall expect your answer upon this Subject as early as may be convenient by post or otherwise—& [_____] * atch you my dear Sir that this Business so long on

⁹⁸ From the Hart Collection.

* Hole in manuscript.

⁹⁹ Still further efforts to settle the Transylvania Company business of the Blounts and Harts. See Willie Blount to Thomas Hart, August 9, 1799, in this volume.

hand has arrived so near a Close and I beg you to present me affectionately to your Lady and believe me with sincere esteem—

W^m. Blount

Col. Thomas Hart

LETTERS FOR 1800

Hans Patten to John Gray Blount

[1800?]

Dear Sir

It was out of my power to come to Town to Day have therefore Sent you twenty Dollars & five Crowns \$25. 1/2 Dollars. I Shall be at town to morrow or next Day, the Jeffersonians are Gaining Ground in Pitt, this was all the money I had or would have Sent it you in Case of need, please have my bag Set over the river immediately.

I am yours Sincerely
Hans Patten

Friday morning

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington

Thomas Smith¹ to John Gray Blount

Washington 20th. [1800?]

Mr. John G: Blount

Sir I have and am much affraid too great reasons to apprehend that Something uncommonly has happened to my Brother J^o. Smith and therefore I require you as his Friend and as his wifes Friend and as mine to Transact what business in My ab-

¹ A ship captain of the Blounts. His brother, John, was also a captain and a supercargo. J. W. G. Prescott to Blount, January 19, 1796, in this volume; Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, *passim*.

sence and before his (arrival) that may Come to be Settled. I Trust to your Judgment & honesty in Every Respect what ever & hoping that you will do^e for the Best

I Remain

Yours as usual

Thomas Smith

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r.

Present

Care of	}	Washington
M ^{rs} .		
John Smith		

Charles Smallwood² to John Gray Blount

[January, 1800]

Mr. Jn^o G Blount

Dr. Sir) A Letter was a few days ago handed me thru the channel of Mr. [John] Willis informing me that a Mr. Joseph Brown had laid claim to a warrant issued in his name it being one of those you got the possession of by means of my transference; and that he further alledges that Richards never had power to receive the same — I wrote you in answer thereto upon its receipt, but for fear of any miscarriage have again presumed the liberty to repeat that, it is very probable indeed that the assertion be true, if this Brown who lais claim, be the same ide[ntical]* Brown to whome the warrant issued; which would in [my]* opinion be a proof substantially necessary before any attention in respect to the warrant be effected—the claim I purchased from the Heir of Richards, and received it (the writing over the signiture excepted) in the same situation I delivered it to you in — if there is any fraud attending the business, it happened prior to either my purchase or possession— However the case be, the business no doubt will be managed by you in such a manner as to render full satisfaction to me & upon your decission of the same shall hold myself responsible for the consideration money—

² Probably Charles Smallwood of Beaufort County. "Census 1790," in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 127.

* Manuscript torn.

I should attend Washington for the purpose of talking with you upon the Subject; but an indisposition at this time unavoidably prevents me—

I am with infinite
Respect Y^{rs.} &^{c.}
Ch^s Smallwood

Jan^y 1800

Addressed: John B. Blount Esq^r
Washington

John Strother to John Gray Blount

Wilmington Jan^y. 2^d. 1800

Sir

I arrived at this place last evening, Gen^l. [Benjamin] Smith will not be ready to enter into the business of the Green Swamp³ 'till next week — I am of opinion that it will be very difficult to Survey it at this time owing to the abundance of water in this Country. I am certain that I shall be obliged to wade from beginning to the ending—and at present it is very cold—however all those things must be surmounted — Smith proposes to be with me constant, if the will, it will have a tendency to lessen the Difficulties, for surely I can not think hard of going where the *General* goes.

As I came through Bladen I was informed that your White Marsh Land was sold for the Taxes; pray let me Know how that business stands, and [2] Inform me if I can do any thing in it — for your benifit. —

Please present my compliments to M^{rs} Blount & family —

I am with respect Y^r Ob^t Serv^t.
John Strother

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
N^o Washington

Post

³ Though bought by Judge James Wilson in 1796, the Green Swamp land was in the hands of John Gray Blount after the speculative collapse of the late 1790's. David Allison to Blount, March 3, 1796; and Benjamin Smith to John Davis, July 17, 1796, in this volume; Memo of Taxes, May 1, 1798, in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

*Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount*Tarbo. Jan^y. 6th 1800

Dear Sir,

I should have written you by Post but was so busy in attending to my plantation affairs, which my cursed overseer had left in the worst possible situation, that I forgot the day of the week it goes out on—and you must therefore excuse me. No private conveyance has offered within my knowledge since Grist & Crawford⁴—you may send the Boys as soon as you please as Business was to commence on the 1st Inst. as you will see by W. E. Webb's advertisement⁵ in M^r Gales last paper⁶—but how will you send them? Jackey will go some day this week to Halifax with Miss Jones & takes with her Jake & the double chair, for my Phaton has so far given out that I have been compelled to send it to Holliman's to be repaired; and she will be absent some days—perhaps until the Middle of next week—Frank Dancy & Lem^l. Sessums⁷ start on friday next & if you could send them in [2] time to accompany them it would be best provided you have a Boy to attend them who has sense enough to find the way back.—Randall never asked permission to come down or I would have sent your Horses by him—I will send them down if an opportunity should offer, but at present I know of none, & if you can send for them it will be well—I brought home with me the money you left with me—but my necessities have compelled me to use £35 of it, & if you suffer it to remain with me I shall be compelled to use more of it, for I am cursedly in debt & have nothing to pay with nor money enough of my own to buy a Dozen of Eggs—I will send it to you by the first safe conveyance & at the same time give you the numbers of the Land Warrants on which the Commissioners have said JG & TB have drawn duplicates—Gales has published the Report of the Commissioners⁸ & I have had a thought of requesting him to publish JG & TB's Memorial with my Motion to

⁴ Probably Frederick Grist and Charles Crawford, local political figures. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 648-649.

⁵ Thomas Harvey Blount and John Gray Blount, Jr. were about to return to the University of North Carolina. The opening date had been advertised by William Webb, member of and secretary to the board of trustees, *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, December 24, 1799.

⁶ Joseph Gales established the *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser* in 1799 as a Republican political voice. Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, II, 159-160.

⁷ Students of the University. Sessums, son of a Tarboro citizen, died at the University in March, 1804 during his senior year. Connor, *Documentary History*, II, 519, 529; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, March 19, 1804.

⁸ The report of the commissioners, involving the Blounts in frauds concerning duplicate land warrants, is in the *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser* of December 24, 1799. See Memorial of John Gray and Thomas Blount, December 16, 1799, and Newspaper Clippings, March 4, 1800, in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

refer it to a Committee — what is your opinion of the propriety or utility of such a publication? Can you send me 1 M Barrel Staves that are [3] fit for present use? if you can, please put them on board the first Boat bound to this place as Barrels are in great Demand here, & if I get them Frank⁹ can earn me a little money to go to market with — It is probable that I shall be obliged to go to Halifax myself; but if I should, my stay must be short. All my family are well & send Love Compt^s. &c. to you & yours —

I remain
Yours
Tho. Blount

Addressed: Mr John Gray Blount
Washington
Free
By Post

Richard Lake and Nephew to John Gray Blount

Kingston Jamaica 6th. Jan^r. 1800

John G. Blount Esq^r.

Sir,

We had the pleasure of receiving your esteemed favor of 8th. Nov^r. by Capt. Tho^s. Smith,—am happy to find you intend speculating in Lumber to this market, as that article still promises well. The Sample brought by Capt. Smith is of a quality much superior to what has been generally imported from your parts and would have commanded a much better price had it not arrived just at the same time as an extraordinary large fleet from England did, which so crowded the wharves as not to leave any one room to receive a Cargo of Lumber.—Corn is at this moment selling as high as 2\$ p bushell.—

We remain with regard
Sir Your mo. obed. Serv.
Rich^d. Lake & Nephew

⁹ Probably a slave.

Washington
North Carolina.

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^{re}.
Merchant
Washington
North Carolina

Fav^d. p Capt. Smith
Sch^r. Two Brothers

Peter Casso¹⁰ to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

Raleigh 11th. January 1800

Dear Sir

Inclosed, you have the Receipt, for your taxes, in This Place, This Day is The Seventh times that I have applied for the Purpose, at Last I got The Sheriff to take the Money by giving him Ten Shillings, which Sum you had Remmitted to me. [1] having applied Direct, [and] he telling Me he was intitled to twenty Shillings by Law for Every Lot he Should advertised, I therefore Returned the Money to Mr. Tho^s. Blount, however, Mr. Blount in talking to him Made him Relinquishe his twenty Shillings; Mr. Tho^s. B. having Then Returned The Cash to Me, I applied, again, and for the want of The Numbers of your Lots it hath Been Differed [deferred], So loun, by him, at Last, however, terminated;

The Sale of Sundrys Lots took Place, yerstoday, according to the advertisement, for the taxes, a few was sold, for Little [or] Nothing; Mess^{rs}. Craven & [Henry?] Potter, Seeing the Sacrifice, hath The goodness to Pay for the Most Part unsold, Trusting to the Proprietors to Repay them hereafter; at the sale I happened to be at Averysborough;

amongst The Sold Lots Are Two, Do't^{or}. Bary, Price 10/—one belonging to francis Poiree,¹¹ Price £10 . . — This, Purchased By J[oseph]. Gales & Jese Mitchell, I Regrett Much, I was Not at

¹⁰ A tavern owner in Raleigh, Casso was one of the early Roman Catholics in Washington, North Carolina. Apparently he, or his son, later went to New Orleans and died there on March 18, 1811. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 631, n.106; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, May 3, 1811: Reed, *Beaufort County*, 149; Casso to Blount, November 4, 1801, and January 8, 1802, in this volume.

¹¹ For identification of Porie see Porie to Blount, April 3, 1800, n.48, in this volume.

home; I arrived Only today and found my wife very Seak with Cholick; The Rest of [2]The famely are well; May you, and yours, be The Same as the Latter of Mine; Nothing further, in this quarter, worth troubling you with; I Remain with a Sincere Esteem and Respect;

Dear Sir
Your Very Humble
friend
P. Casso

P. S. Present My Respects to
Mrs. Blount and famely
John G. Blount Esqr.

Addressed: John Gray Blounte Esqr.
Merchant
Washington N. C.

[enclosure]

Received Raleigh 11th . . . January 1800, of John G. Blount Esqr. The Sum of ten Shilling for his County taxes, for the year 1798 by the Hand of Peter Casso, being My Charge against Said J^{no} G. B., for his town Lotts in the City of Raleigh, as The Lots hath Not being given in, N^o. 3. 5. 7. & 8.

F. Bledsoe Shff

Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount

Edenton 14th. Jan^y 1800

Dear Sir

Your favour of the 3^d Inst came to hand the 8th. you request me to answer respecting twine [.] I have rec^d no letter from you respecting twine at all, I spoke to Mr. Collins about the Land at the head of Pungo, who says he would not give one thousand there for 50,000 on Allegato,¹² Gen^l. Beasley¹³ reports no land at all to be found, it was a Constant rain all the time he was down there, the Winds was Easterly all the time he was down there,

¹² Alligator River, in Tyrrell, Dare, and Hyde Counties.

¹³ Probably John B. Beasley of Chowan County. Wheeler, *Sketches*, I, 71.

which always overflows nearly all the lands toward the head of the River, his report is as unfavourable as it well can be, The amt. of the money paid by Mr. Collins to Littlejohn is \$632. .42 which is the Judgt. with the Costs, and Baker has claimed from Littlejohn 3 1/2\$ over and above what is allowed by Law, he is constant writing me about 3 1/2\$ of Jabes Joneses [.] do when you settle with him pay him for that also, as it was deducted out of the Judgt

It will be quite agreeable to me that our representative should change his name but if he does he must do it by Petetion for he wont be able to do it by applying in person the next session¹⁴ or I am mistaken, Whether I wrote you at the time [2] I paid Bryan for you or not, I dont recollect but I meant that £82.10 should go to the Heirs of Myles Harvey for the three years that Doctr. Ramese [?] had him, the Note for the last year is not paid yet Say £25. .1. I shall bring suit at our March Court. I have hired him out to a good Man Who will pay punctually at the time, for 25£. and he keeps him in a clockmakers Shop which will be of a very considerable advantage to him,¹⁵—

We are all well Sukey¹⁶ joins in Love to Polley & c.

Yours &c

Jacob Blount

Free

Addressed: Mr. John Gray Blount
Washington

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarb°. 17th Jan^r. 1800

Dear Sir

I send you enclosed a List of the Warrants on which it is said JG & TB have drawn duplicates — this List, in the form I present it, makes that part of the Report of the last Commissioners¹⁷ which has not been published — I hope it will enable

¹⁴ The reference may be to William Slade, Edenton's representative in the General Assembly, who was defeated the next year by Jacob Blount's kinsman, Josiah Collins. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 95.

¹⁵ This probably refers to hiring out a slave belonging to the Miles Harvey estate, in which the Blounts were financially involved by Jacob Blount, Jr.'s second marriage. See n.16 below.

¹⁶ Mrs. Jacob Blount, formerly Susannah Harvey, widow of Augustus Harvey. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxvii-xxviii.

¹⁷ Investigating land frauds of which the Blounts were accused. See Thomas to John Gray Blount, May 17, 1798, n.57, in this volume.

you to unravel the mystery in which this Business has hitherto been enveloped—Tom & John arrived here the night before last in Safety & started for Taylor's this morning¹⁸ all well[.] My necessities have compelled me to use precisely one hundred Dollars—the Balance I send you by Cap^t. [Henry] Ross who will deliver you this Letter — & I do it because I know your necessities are great, for if I was going to Gaol for one Dollar I could not raise it — the rascally managers of the Canal Lottery will not pay the Prizes or my distresses would be in some measure alleviated. What employment have you, or will you have for my man Luke? I ask because the indolence & mismanagement of my last year's overseer has put me much behind hand with my new ground, & as I have not [2] ground enough open to employ all my force or hardly to make grain enough for my family's use, if you do not longer want him, I would take [him] home to grub & maul during the winter & Spring — and in the Summer I could perhaps get employment for him as a nailer in Parker's Shop — but I don't wish to take him from you if you have need of him — If George cannot himself bring down your Horses I will send a Boy to assist him in the Business — My Sister & perhaps Nancy¹⁹ will come down in the Phaton — We are all well & send Love, Compliments &c. to Polly, Polly Ann²⁰ & family —

I am as usual

Yours

Tho. Blount

Addressed: M^r John Gray Blount
Washington
Fav^d. by
Cap^t. Ross

¹⁸ Sons of John Gray Blount on the way to school. See Thomas to John Gray Blount, January 6, 1800, in this volume.

¹⁹ "My sister & . . . Nancy" Anne Blount Harvey and William Blount's daughter, Anne, called Nancy by the family. See Mary Blount to Susannah Harvey, September 26, 1796, n.193, in this volume.

²⁰ "Polly, Polly Ann," the wife and daughter of John Gray Blount. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxiv; Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*, I, 36.

*Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount*Edenton Jan^y. 21st 1800

Dear sir

Your letter respecting twine never came to hand, and at this time the demands for that article is so great that it wont be possible to get it until next week when Mr Millin says I shall have that quantity if Possible, and will inform you by Next post when they may send to Plymouth for it, J. Collins²¹ having made a contract to supply the U. States with 40 Tons Cordage by a certain time is obliged to brake off some of His twine Spinners, and put them to spinning Rope Yarns, Blair is out of Town, and what was done with Hardys Exⁿ. cant say but will inform you by Next Post—all well I am in Love &c

Yours &c

Jacob Blount

Addressed: Mr John Gray Blount
Washington

Free

*William Charles Lake to John Gray and Thomas Blount*Liverpool Jan^y. 25th. 1800J G & Tho: Blount Esq^{rs}.

Gent. .

I have now to inform you that I had the pleasure of receiving a Letter from our mutual friend Mr. W^m. Ross inclosing me Stone & C^os Draft on Reed Irving & C^o for Two hundred and twenty five Pounds at Sixty days — it was at first refus'd acceptance but at maturity (which was the 22^d.) it was duely paid and I have placed it to the credit of your account and you'll please to accept my acknowledgements for it — hope it may soon be in your power to pay the remainder which I assure you will be very acceptable as money never was known so scarce in this Country as at present. It will give me pleasure to re[2]new the commercial

²¹ Josiah Collins, Jacob's father-in-law, owned a rope factory in Edenton. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 177, n.30.

correspondence we have had, whenever you find this market promises success to send your Ships to.

I annex the present prices Curr. here and remain (wish^g. you a long sucession of happy years) — D^r Sirs

Your most obed Serv
W^m. Cha: Lake

Prices Current

Pitch	.....10/ to 11/—	
Tar	.....26/	
Turpentine	.....16 — 17 —	
Bees Wax	.....£10. — . —	
Rosin	.....12.	
Staves W: O: Bbl	£16. — . —	R:Oak £7. — . —
	Hh ^d . 20. — . —	. . 11. — . —
	Pipe 30. — . —	. . 20. — . —
Deer Skins	.....16 ^d to 2 —	

Addressed: John Gray & Tho: Blount Esq^r.
Washington
North Carolina

Via
Baltimore

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarb^o. 2^d Febr 1800

Dear Sir,

I two days ago rec^d. the enclosed Letter from James Turner — please read it & return it to me by the next mail with your advice concerning the answer which I must give to it on Friday next by the Louisburg mail — I think M^r Turner has acted in a friendly & gentlemanly manner towards us on this occasion & all others, and I wish to give him such an answer as shall evince my sense of his conduct; but it is impossible for me to engage that the money shall be paid by the time he has mentioned unless you can with perfect certainty say that you can & will raise it, for I do not know or believe that I can raise 100 Dollars & I would suffer any inconvenience or Injury rather than [2] deceive him or abuse his confidence — pray don't fail to return his Letter by the

mail with your advice for I must answer him on friday next without fail—

My Sister & Nancy will come down as soon as the weather moderates & the roads get passable — at present we have a large Snow on the ground which fell on Wednesday last & a strong prospect of another—We are all well & herein send you to be distributed in your family & Reading's (when you see them)
Love, Comp^{ts}., good wishes & all that—

I am
as usual
Yo. Mo. Ob^t.
Tho. Blount

Pray have your feather
Grass seed ready by
the time my Sister comes
down—I mean as much as
you can spare

}

Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount

Philadelphia 15th. Febr. 1800

Dear Sir,

I rec^d. a letter from Doctor [Hugh] Williamson some days ago, in which he requests me [to] know from Mr. Strother or Price,²² "the latitude of Raleigh [,] New Berne, Wilmington & Edenton, respectively; and what is the longitude of either of those places, provided they have ascertained the Longitude by astronomical Observations." Shall I trouble you to make those inquiries and write me on the Subject that I may inform the Doctor. You see I am determined to beg you into a Correspondence whether you will or not —

I have been very ill since my arrival here, but am at present on the recovery, and think I have a prospect of weathering March, that is much as to say I dont expect to die this year, unless by accident.

Business goes on but Slowly in Congress; that which relates to finance will be necessarily delayed, untill we can hear from the

²² For Price's and Strother's maps, see David Allison to Blount, January 21, February 18, and April 1, 1796, in this volume. Williamson was engaged in writing one of his geographical studies or histories. Spaight to Blount, March 28, 1800, in this volume; *Dictionary of American Biography*, XX, 298-300.

Envoys;²³ which is now daily expected. The Bill to establish an uniform system of Bankruptcy is to be read for the 3^d time in the H: of R. on Monday [.] whether it will, or will not pass is very doubtful, I am [2] inclined to think it will be rejected. It is however much amended for the better from what it was last year — The Committee are maturing a new —————* Judiciary bill, but as they have not reported it & seen nothing of it, I cant give you any outline or Acc^t. of it —

You were so obliging as to give me some names in Hyde that I ought to write to, but when I came from home I was so unwell, that I could not arrange my papers, and of Course left many behind me I will thank you to give me a new list — and I must further request you to forward from the Washington post office such letters as I send there for persons in Hyde—

M^{rs}. Spaight Joins me in Comp^{ts}. to M^{rs}. Blount and M^{rs}. R. Blount. Please to give my comp'ts to Col^o R. Blount & believe me to be with esteem

Dear sir,
Your Sincere friend
Rich^d. Dobbs Spaight

John Gray Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Washington
N^o Carolina
Free Rich^d. D. Spaight

Isaac Levy²⁴ to John Gray Blount

John Blunt Esqr

Washington N C
— [February 16, 1800]

Sir. Thru the recommendation I had of Mr J W G. Prescott — to you induces me to drop you a few lines and to Settle a Correspondence with you if a greeble—which there is no Doubt of once you make inquiry how and what I am, by that means you

²³ Oliver Ellsworth, William R. Davie, and William Vans Murray were sent to France by President Adams to seek an end to the naval warfare between the U. S. and France. Ellsworth and Davie sailed from America; Murray was already in Europe as United States Minister to The Netherlands. They all arrived in France in March, 1800, and negotiations were prolonged by Napoleon's campaigns and negotiations to obtain Louisiana from Spain. Bemis, *Diplomatic History*, 123-124.

* Illegible.

²⁴ A merchant of St. Pierre, Martinique. He also spelled his name Levi. Isaac Levi to Blount, July 21, 1800, in this volume.

will be able to know if I am able to pay you for the Cargo I
Send to you for, which is as Follows—

50 M. Board and plank

10 M. Scantlin

10 M. Nongre[e]n timbers from 6. to 8 f, 8 to 10

100 M 22 Shingles — 50 Balls black Eye Pees and few Raw
Pork Loin half &h for which I will Remit you Doller
Government Bills or Produ[c]e — if this Is And Such as
you will think proper. in the mean time I Remain Sr
your Most

Ob Humble S Isaac Levy
Broker

S. Pierre * Feby 16 1800

Addressed: John G. Blount Esqr
Merchant
Washington
N. Carolina —

p^r Cap Russell

Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount

Edenton Feb^y 21st. 1800

Dear John

You have never informed me what plea Alderson had plead
to the Suit Josiah Collins against him, if he had plead nonesfac-
ton²⁵ please git a Soupena for me and Send me, and I will attend
if possible, if you think the Suit will be tryed this Court[.] of that
you will also please inform me as I do not much like leaving
home, Sukey latterly is much Troubled with the Choleck, and
Low Spirited, I am sorry to learn by Mr [Grove?] Wright that
you have the Rheumesis, I hope it is slight. The Roll Brimstone
has had very good Effect with several at this place indeed it has
effected a perfect cure when everything E[lse] had failed, It has
been taken by Mr Tres——† at the rate of 2 Table Spoonsfull†
day

Yours &c
Jacob Blount

* Illegible.

²⁵ *Non est factum*. In an action over debt this plea was approximately the same as the modern "general denial," and if pled would have brought the case to trial. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 1498.

† Manuscript torn.

N. Long²⁶ to John Gray Blount

D^r Sir

Bellmont near Washington
State of Georgia
Feb^y 25th 1800

Upon examining into the laws of this State I find the validity of the Sales of James R. Whitney Tax collector of Franklin County²⁷ (wherein your lands lay for the most part) very doubtful, and it appears to me if you were to come forward pay all arrears of Taxes and contest the matter with the purchasers under that Sale that you might Still hold the land and perhaps it will be worth your while to do So, for at this time those Sales are unpopular and most people from the immense injury caused by them, have set their faces against them — The last legislature have apointed Comissioners to enquire into the State of those Sales made by Whitney and to report thereon to the governor [2] by the first of August which will lead to experiments with respect to the titles.

Now Sir Should you determine upon giving up that property as not worth contending for yourself permit me to make you an offer on that Score—

I will advance the amount of all the Taxes due upon your repaying one half at a future day—and will be at the whole expence of prosecuting the Suits, procuring information processing the Lands &c. for one half of the Land if secured, and Otherwise to loose my trouble and expence except the first advances for the Taxes, Should the land be ultimately lost — If the above proposition Should meet your aprobation, a description of the lands with all the title papers must be imediately Sent forward together with An article by which I may be secured in my proportion of the land upon the due performance of my [3] part as above Stated. So as to reach me by the middle of July next. Should you not be disposed to accept my terms, you will avail yourself of the information herein contained to do yourself justice for perhaps

²⁶ Unidentified.

²⁷ On the west side of the Tongaloo (now Tugaloo) River, Franklin was bounded in 1795 by the Tongaloo on the east, Elbert County on the south, Cherokee County on the west, and its northern boundary was just south of the Tennessee line. W. Barker, "Georgia from the Latest Authorities," in William Guthrie, *A New System of Modern Geography* First American Edition by Mathew Carey (Philadelphia: Mathew Carey, 2 volumes, 1794-1795), II.

you may not have so good an opportunity if the present is lost
and in the mean time it will give me pleasure to Serve you

I am with esteem & respect

Your Ob^t. Ser^t.

N Long

Addressed: Washington Geo. 29th March —

John Gray Blount esq^r

Washington

N^o Carolina

Post

Spyers Singleton to John Gray Blount

Cool Springs February 27th. 1800

Dear Sir

Your fav^r. of the 17th. Inst. I received this day & Agreeably to your request have examined the returns from Carterett and find John Wallace charged with 651 acres land two Houses under the value of one hundred Dollars say 90 each the whole together valued to \$10898 . . 50 C^{ts} [;] also one Dwelling House one out House and 30 poles of land valued therewith to \$270:—

On examining the Law I find the 22^d Section empowers the Commissioners to equalize and vary the valuations, but as I understand it they must do it by Districts for Instance if they thought the District of Beaufort was valued 50 p^r C^t higher than the district of Craven in that case they may add 50 p^r C^t to Craven or deduct 50 p^r C^t from Beaufort but I do not think they can undertake to reduce any one valuation in a District without making it general; you complain that the principal assessors had not power to reduce the valuation on an appeal, if you read the 19th. & 20 Section of the Law you will find it is his duty so to do, and he may even raise them first giving the partie five days notice to appear and Shew cause if any why they shall not be raised; with respect to the 23^d Section of the Law it means no more than that the principal assessors are to extend the valuation of each Individual ading thereto or Deducting therefrom the rate per centum as fixed by the Commissioners;

I am respectfully yours &c

Spyers Singleton

\$10898 . . 50 Secon class

270 . . first

*William Blackledge to John Gray Blount*Thos. Blackledge's 5th March 1800

Dear Sir)

My Mother is very unwell, but is however home on the recovery from a very dangerous illness; and the Doctors have recommended it to me to procure a little good Wine for her, but it is not to be found either at Greenville or Spier's landing²⁸ for I have sent to both places. I must therefore request you to do her the favor of getting her a bottle or two of the best to be had in your town, and send her[e] either by Mr. . Grove Wright or Mr. . P. Smith who is at Washington. The Doctors recommend Madera, but if this cant be had any other white Wine will answer; it is to mix in bitters. I am told that Mr. . Ross has the best in town—Mr. . Wright brings a letter for Rich^d. . [Blackledge] informing him that M^cKim has dissolved his injunction for £90 paid to James Ellis, & that Andrew Griar has also dissolved the injunction obtain ag^t. him, which please to forward as soon as an opportunity may offer, They were all well at Sharpes on Monday Morning, but Coart²⁹ had not brought down M^{rs}. Harveys Corn, I am Sir

Your Obd^t Serv^t
W^m. . Blackledge

John G. Blount Esq^r. .

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington

Favord by
Mr. . Wright

*Willis Allston to John Gray Blount*Philadelphia March 8th 1800

Dear Sir

Inclosed is a paper containing the act passed this session on the subject of land in the N, W, Territory together with a list of the locations made in conformity

²⁸ William Spier's Landing on the Tar River in Pitt County was a mercantile center, having often been designated an inspection station by the legislature. Clark, *State Records*, XXIII, 641, 792; XXIV, 581; XXV, 379.

²⁹ Cox Coart was first an apprentice and then a clerk in the Blount store. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 68.

Congress have done very little business worth communicating, In consequence of the unavoidable delays in making arrangement for collecting the direct Tax³⁰ I am inclined to believe that the law will not be renewed for the year 1800[.] if it was we should in North Carolina have to pay two direct Taxes in the same year owing to the delays which have taken place in that [2] state [;] a loan is to be reverted to for the purpose of supplying the deficiency of revenue

I am with sentiments
of respect you most
obt S^t
Willis Allston

Free Willis Allston

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington
N. Carolina

Willie Blount to John Gray Blount [via Thomas Blount]

Nashville March 9th 1800

Dear Sir,

I inclose you an abstract account of the Situation of Reading Blount's land — I shall endeavor to find out all interferences and give a full and particular account when I shall have obtained the necessary information — There are two entries made for Reading Blount near to Robertson County Court House and the lands for the same Soldiers' names, same N°. of warrants and Same quantity of land as to acres are granted on subsequent entries on Obey's river, and those lands near to Robertson Court House still vacant and believed to be R Blount's land — The Assessors of the direct tax have returned lands here in the names of all my brothers who own lands here as taxable and have applied to me for the taxes — I told them that you had informed me you would give in all your lands in North Carolina and that I would inform you that they the assessors had made returns here — J. G. Blount. J.G. & T. Blount, R. Blount, J. G. Blount & E. Harris [,] E. Harris' lands thus returned by the assessors amounts to largely

³⁰ The Act of July 9, 1798, was very unpopular and was frequently amended but not repealed until after the War of 1812. *United States Statutes*, I, 580-591; Willie to John Gray Blount, March 9, 1800, in this volume.

upwards of 100 dollars tax — I wish to know from you as soon as may be for the government of the Collectors what will be necessary for me to do in that respect—The want of time prevents me from writing you more fully—I shall use my best endeavors to obtain a correct statement of your land business in this State and transmit to you — [2] You will see by the inclosed Paper that our head men do not like your land law — Please make my compliments acceptable to your good lady and family — I am
as usual

Willie Blount

Thos. Blount Esquire, who is requested to forward this to J. G. Blount with its inclosures and [after] reading — Send to me by the return of Mr. Phillips the courses of the lands and other information respecting the titles of such tracts as you got of John Brown —

Addressed: Thomas Blount Esquire
Tarboro
North Carolina

Hand by Mr. Battle

As this Letter though directed to me was intended for you, I take the earliest opportunity of forwarding it —

Tho. Blount
to
[J]* G. Blount

Tarb°. 22^d. Ap^l. 1800

Willie Blount to Thomas Blount

March 10th 1800

Dear Sir,

The inclosed are copies of R Blount's locations by me taken from the book of entries — I may not have taken all but shall examine again and get such others as may be to be found—These locations have been managed badly — I am

Your Ob^t. Servant
Willie Blount

* Manuscript torn.

Tho^s. Blount Esq^r. To be sent to J. G. Blount

N. B. Perhaps it would be well for you or Mr. Sumner to authorize the resurveying of Gen^l. Sumner's³¹ tract and request the surveyer to note carefully all interferences of other claims and have them represented in a fair plan — I do not know of any interferences but it is more than probable in so large a tract — Addressed:

As this Letter though directed to me was intended for you, I take the earliest opportunity of forwarding it —

Tarbo^o. 22^d. Ap^l. 1800

Tho. Blount
to
J. G. Blount

Thomas Blount Esquire
Tarboro
North Carolina
Mr. Battle.

Grove Wright to John Gray Blount

Greenville 10th March 1800

Sir

I have sent down by M^r Stoke's Flatt 213 Barrels Tar and 37 of Varnish, which I wish you,d be so obliging as to receive and have it put in order for me, and deliver it to Cap^t. Read on board the Sea Flower, If you hav't Coopers I will thank you to employ one — I Shall be down the last of the week with a nother Load

With Respect I
am y^r. ob^t. Serv^t.
Grove Wright

Addressed: John G Blount Esquire
In his absence
M^r W^m Orr

³¹ "Mr. Sumner. . . General Sumner's" Thomas Blount's father-in-law was General Jethro Sumner, whose son was T. E. Sumner. See Thomas to John Gray Blount, October 12, 1798, n.107, in this volume.

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarb°. 13 [M]arch 1800

Dear Sir,

I find by the 21st. Article of the Spanish Treaty³² that the duty of the Commissioners thereby directed to be appointed is to settle claims & award damages for vessels & Cargoes taken by subjects of Spain from t[h]e* citizens of the U. States during the late War between Spain & France — but it is stipulated in the 6th art. of that Treaty That each party shall endeavor, by all means in their power, to protect & defend all vessels & other Effects belonging to the citizens or subjects of the other, which shall be within the extent of their jurisdiction by Sea or by Land, and shall use all their Efforts to recover & cause to be restored to the right owners, their vessels & effects which may have been taken from them within the extent of their said Jurisdiction, whether they are at War or not with the Power whose subjects have taken possession of the said [e]ffects*—[2] and the[6?]th* art. Stipulates that all Ships & merchandise, of what nature soever, which shall be rescued out of the hands of any pirates or Robbers on the high Seas, shall be brought into some port of either State, and Shall be delivered to the custody of the officers of the Port, in order to be taken care of, & restored entire to the true Proprietor, as soon as due sufficient Proof shall be made concerning the property thereof wherefore, as it may be considered that some one of these Stipulations is applicable to the case of the Grampus, I advise you to forward your claim without delay to the Secretary of State as well authenticated as possible. I say without delay, because the power of the Commissioners is limited in duration to 18 Months from the day of their meeting at Phil^a. The Deed for the Greene County Land I will send you by the first safe Land conveyance, & if none offers to Washington will send it to New Bern — Jackey sends for Polly a Rock Rose — please direct one of your ———* to send back in the same Box some [3] small Cedars with as much ———rt* to them as can con-

³² The Treaty of San Lorenzo, or Pinckney's Treaty. David Hunter Miller (ed.), *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States of America* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1931) II, 318-338, especially 323 and 335-337.

* Manuscript torn.

veniently be got — We a[r]e* well & offer you & yours love,
Compliments &c.

Tho. Blount

Addressed: [John Gr*]ay Blount
[Sch*]enck's Washington
Flat

William Blackledge to John Gray Blount

NewBern 23^d. . March 1800

Dear Sir)

Jesse Cobb is nonsuited in Consequence of Richards not attending as a Witness, and Cobb not attending to swear that he was a material evidence [,] for the Judge would not admit his attorney to file an affidavit unless he could also procure proof that Cobbs absence was owing to sickness or some inevitable circumstance; Harris did not say one word upon the subject to the Court which is to me the more pleasing.

They got as far as N^o. 50 on the Pitt Beauford &c Rule³³ last night that is to say in one day & there were a great many non-suits owing to the clients & witnesses nonattendance —

John Coart tells me that Lamotte has agreed with Sharpe to take the Corn at 22/6 at the ferry & pay the Cash as soon as the Corn is del'd which he says shall be done in the Course of a fortnight—With Compliments to M^{rs} Blount I am your Obd^t Serv^t

W^m. . Blackledge

P. S. I forgot to mention that Arwatt has got Judgmt. . ag^t. . M^r Neale & yourself, and am Sorry that I cant particularly recollect the am^t————†

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington

Favord by
M^r West

* Manuscript torn.

³³ In law, a rule is a special occasion for pleas in cases of a certain type or, as in this instance, of a certain geographical area. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 1496.

† Illegible.

*John Wallace to John Gray Blount*Shell Castle March 24th. . 1800

Dear Sir.

This day arrived Mr [JWG] Prescott on his way from Norfolk to Washington he has left his Vessel in Virginia Chartered to Mr. Joseph Lister to proceed a voyage to St. . Bartholomews — as he is a Swede himself and the Vessel under Sweedish papers; ³⁴ unfortunately have got On Shore, but by this time believes her on float [.] as Our Mutual Friend Mr. R. Blackledge is concerned in said vessel, I advise Mr Prescott to come and see you and Mr B. on the business as it is not in my power to help him to five dollars. he has doubts that Mr. . B. Blount³⁵ may trouble him which will greatly injure Mr. Blackledge. My advice to Mr. . Prescott is to proceed to Washington as soon as possible to advise with you and Mr. . R. B.

The Public papers & accounts I have Not yet arranged, but Shall Send them on by [2] the first oppertu^r. as Cap^t Taylor is gone to Newbern whom I wanted to assist me in the business. I expect the Caleb over from Mattemuskeet hourly which I intend to send On to St Augusteen, with the utmost dispatch and as soon, as I git her away, I am going to Core Sound³⁶ to Engage Some One to git timber for our Intended Building this Season, as also Some Cash.

As to the business of the wreck, Mayo—had bought and Sold her before my return from Washington, and as Such there is Nothing to be expected from that quarter.

I send you some oysters by Mr. P. and, Remain with Esteem yours

John Wallace

Our porpouse fishing I am told is doing very well. I will let you know as soon as I Return from there J. W.

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r.

Washington

Mr. Prescott

³⁴ St. Bartholomew's Island was traded by France to Sweden in 1784. A Swedish ship and crew would naturally be welcome there. France repurchased the island in 1877. Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 535.

³⁵ Probably Bryan Blount of Beaufort County, a political ally of John Gray Blount. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 259, 286; "Census 1790," in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 260.

³⁶ Off Carteret County just south of Pamlico Sound. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, map opposite 64; David Stick, *The Outer Banks of North Carolina, 1584-1958* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1958), 29, 308, end paper map.

*John Summerville*³⁷ to *Thomas Blount*Knoxville Mar: 27^t. 1800

Sir

The melancholy task of detailing to you the distressing events which have taken place in your Brother Williams family within the last month, devolves on me.

On the 10^t. instant M^{rs}. . Grainger³⁸ was buried after a short illness of a bilious fever — during her sickness M^{rs}. . Blount was confined a day or two & Miss Loisa³⁹ had a severe attack for three days, but is now in perfect health. — The day after M^{rs}. Grainger was buried Billy⁴⁰ was attacked with a very violent bilious fever, which had nearly cost him his life — he is now well, tho not recovered his strength, — before he was considered out of danger, his father on the evening of Saturday the 15. instant after reading newspapers in the piazza 'till it was so late he could not distinguish a letter, was taken very suddenly with a violent chill in ½ an hour after drinking his coffee, (at which he felt as well as he ever did) to this succeeded a violent fever & that night & the next day he was delirious — Monday [2] & Tuesday he appeared so well that no doubt was entertained of his immediate recovery, but before Wednesday morning (for that night he felt so well that he would suffer no person to sit up with him) he caught a second cold which siezed upon his lungs — he was blistered a second time — his disease appeared to make a stand, neither growing better nor worse, 'till 5 oclock Friday morning the 21st when it suddenly changed for the worse & death appeared in every feature, he thus continued 'til about 10 — when a very profuse perspiration came on, which immediately changed his looks & feelings for the better & all around him felt a confidence in his recovery renewed — for my part, who was with him constantly, I never felt more confidence in the recovery of any person than I did of his 'til 4 o clock when he started up very suddenly; said he could lie no longer, I placed my self behind him — I had scarcely got myself fixed, before death struck him — I laid him

³⁷ A confidential agent of William Blount. In 1795, acting as a front for William Blount and Stockley Donelson, Summerville built a store in Raleigh under the name of John Summerville and Company to buy western lands in return for merchandise. He was in Philadelphia with William Blount when the latter was expelled from the Senate and apparently later returned to Tennessee. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 593, 596-598. William to John Gray Blount, November 7, 1797, in this volume.

³⁸ Mother of Mrs. William Blount. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xviii.

³⁹ Summerville probably meant Mary Louisa Blount, a daughter of William. See Summerville's second letter to John Gray Blount, on March 27, 1800, following, in this volume. Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*, I, 36.

⁴⁰ Son of William Blount. Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*, I, 36.

down, amazed at the change, & prepared to close his eyes — but using vinegar to his temples, nostrils & the palm of his hand, revived him again so much that he spoke frequently, tho' incoherently—about $\frac{3}{4}$ after four he lost the use of his speech & then from all appearances [3] & his actions his sensis returned — he turned his eyes upon me as I leaned over him wetting his lips watching every breath that he breathed — looked stedfastly at me some minutes, tryed to speak — and finding that he could not he turned away his head — his eyes immediately filled and the tears rolled in large drops down his cheeks for several minutes, and at 21 minutes after 5 — he breathed his last

never was a death more unexpected — his continued deleriam & our ignorance of the danger he was in, has prevented an arrangement of his affairs — of which he said nothing to any person. —

M^{rs}. . Blount has been confined to her bed very ill ever since this unhappy event happened — She is now I am happy to say, out of danger of a severe attack & will in a day or two be able to leave her bed. — Willie is yet in Nashville — but it is expected he will immediately return on hearing of the death of his Brother — I am very respectfully

Your Ob^t Sr
J^o Summerville

Col^o. Tho.^s Blount

Addressed: Col^o Thomas Blount
Tarborough
N^o. Carolina

Post

John Summerville to John Gray Blount⁴¹

Knoxville Mar: 27^t: 1800

Dear Sir

It is with extreme pain that I inform you of the death of your Brother William and the present indisposition of M^{rs}. . Blount. —

On the 10^t. instant M^{rs}. . Grainger was buried after a short illness — the next day Billy was suddenly attacked with a billius

⁴¹ For identification of people mentioned in this letter see the previous letter from Summerville to Thomas Blount, March 27, 1800, in this volume.

fever, which run his life hard, during his illness, your Brother, from breaking his rest moving about at all hours of the night caught a cold which brough on a violent bilious fever on the evening of the 15^t. inst:—He felt pretty well while drinking his coffee & in h[alf] an hour thereafter he was seized with a violent Chill — to which succeeded a hot fever, all that night and the day he was delirious, in the evening of this day he was blistered, & the next morning he appeared much better & continued to mend 'til the next night, when he by some unknown means caught a second cold which [2] fastened upon his lungs — from this time he grew worse, his delirium returned — fresh blisters was applied and we thought he began to grow better 'til 5 o clock on friday morning the 21^t. inst. when his complaint grew suddenly worse & it was expected he would expire in a short time, 'til 10 o clock, when a very profuse perspiration came on, from which time 'til about 4 o clock he appeard to grow better & I had the most sanguine hopes of his recovery — at this time he sprung up in the bed — death that instant struck him & at h[alf] past five I closed his eyes. — He appeared from his actions to have died in his sences, but was speechless, about h[alf] an hour before he expired he fixed his eyes steadfastly on mine & endeavored to speak, but could not, & finding that he was not able to speak he turned his head away — his eyes immediately filled and the tears rolled down his cheeks in very large drops. — He made no arrangements of his affairs, nor did he say any thing about them, being almost constantly in a delerium & no one dreaming of his danger — This severe stroke has confined M^{rs}. Blount [3] to her bed ever since your Brothers death, she is now somewhat composed & is on the recovery — Billy has recovered & the rest of the family well — Miss Mary, while M^{rs}. Grainger was sick had a severe attack for a few days. — Willie is yet in Nashville, I suppose this unfortunate event will bring him home immediately, Some letters of yours under date of the 29^t. Jan^y. last were only rec^d. this day. — M^{rs}. . Summerville presents her compliments to you & your good Lady in which I join & am with much respect

Your obt^t Sr

Jn^o Summerville

Jn^o. Gray Blount Esq

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r

Washington

N^o. Carolina

Post

*Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount*Philadelphia 28th March 1800

Dear Sir,

Three days ago I was favored with yours of the 12th Instant. I have written to the Doctor, the information which Strother gave you, and hope he will from Pasquotank send on the Latitude & Longitude of those places for him. he wishes to publish his book, & I wish very much that it was published.⁴²

The Executive has not rec^d. any letters from our Envoys to France, since the [y] left this. we have heard indirectly that they arrived at Lisbon the beginning of Dec^r. last, & that they afterwards, sailed in Barry from thence, to some port in France; I suppose Lorient. Dispatches are daily expected from them, but there has been no late arrivals from Europe. I hope in God that they may Settle all our differences with that nation, that we may be once more reduced to a peace establishment, and a State of Economy, which would be desirable to every real well wisher of the United States, tho' it might prove detrimental to the seekers of places &c. under the present administration[.] I have never had an Oportunity of any conversation with you since I have taken a seat in Congress, and it is not always proper to comit ones Ideas' to paper. I can only generally say that last Session I was a mere observer, endeavoring to find out the views [2] of both parties, but not to be of any party myself — During the present Session I have been so unwell that I have not had Spirits to take any active part in politics — the principal thing I wished to Carry, I failed in because I did not represent a New England district; I mean the having a longer time of payment for the duties on West-India produce, imported into the United States. my other motion for a law respecting wrecks, has not been reported on by the committee of Commerce & Manufactures to whom it was referred —

In respect to health I am the most unfortunate fellow living. in the fall 1798 I was 3 months sick, and have not enjoyed scarcely a days health since the 3^d. of October last untill 9 or 10 days ago, when I first began to eat dinner with appetite & to feel as if I should get well. I consider that when I arrived here, in consequence of the Journey, I was reduced really to a lower state &

⁴² Dr. Hugh Williamson was writing his *Observations on the Climate in Different Parts of America*, not published until 1811, or his *The History of North Carolina*, published in 1812. See Spaight to Blount, February 15, 1800, n.22, in this volume.

the sources of life nearer extinguished, than at any period of my existance, & the Doctor and many others thought I must die—My Spirits thank God never quite fail tho' they some times flagg; had it not been for them I should never have reached Philadelphia. My two boys have got well & hearty I shall have them inoculated in a few days —

I have before been informed that Mr. Stanly would be my opponent. I indeed understood as much before I left home. I make no doubt he will use every means in his power to accomplish his views — but even puting myself out of the question, I could not [3] wish him success, because I think him an improper Character but that is not likely to have any weight with the electors in the district, & they may probably elect him — Froth you know always swims on the surface.

I have sent on to Strother all the information I could get respecting the engraving of the map of N^o Carolina, but have not rec^d. a line from him—What is your Brother Tom about? I wrote him two months ago & have not heard from him or of him since.

M^{rs} Spaight Joins me in Compliments to M^{rs} Blount.

I am with Esteem

Dear Sir,

Your most Ob^t. Ser^t.

Rich^d. Dobbs Spaight

John Gray Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire

Washington

N^o: Carolina

Free

Rich^d. D. Spaight

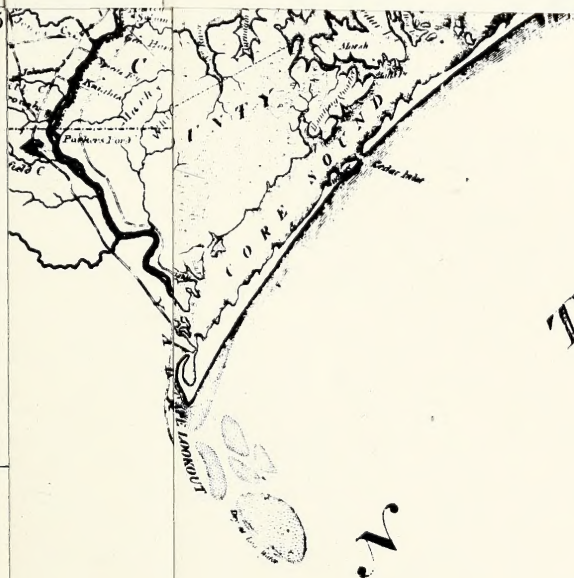
Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

Philadelphia 29th March 1800

Dear Sir,

By this days post, I rec^d. your favor of the 15th Instant. Being confined to my room with the gout in my right foot an Ankle, which attacked me last Wednesday, & which I hope will prove the *clearing up squad*,⁴³ I thought my best way to get the

⁴³ *I.e.*, the last phase of an episode, in this case Spaight's bad health. Spaight to Blount, February 15, 1800, n. 22, in this volume.



EXPLANATION

• Conveyance Line.

o Mills

(M) Spoken Meeting House.

B.M. Baptist..... D

M.M. Methodist..... D

— Roads

— Stage and Conveyance Line

— Swamp or Marsh

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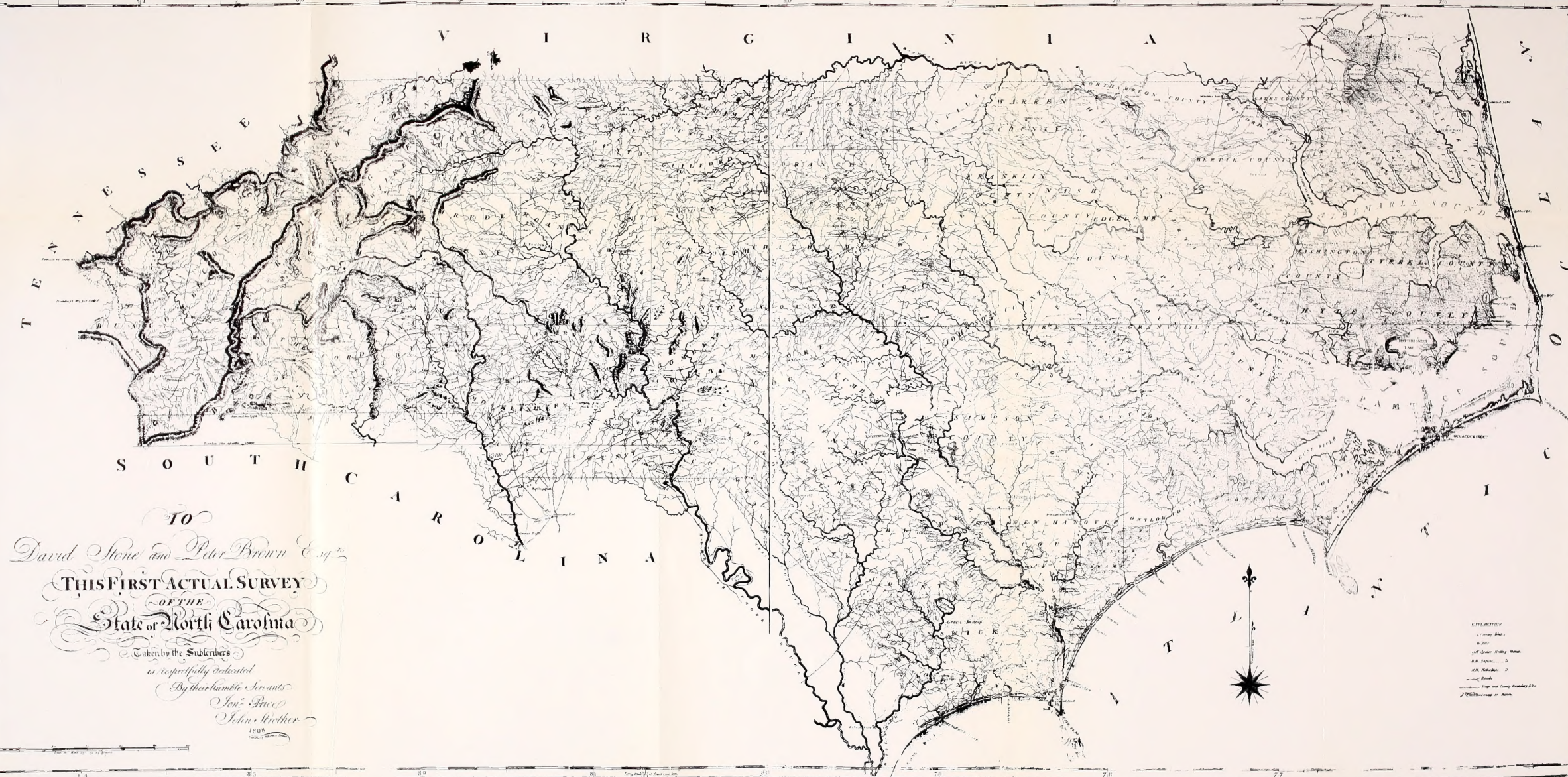
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TO
David Stone and Peter Brown Esqrs
THIS FIRST ACTUAL SURVEY
 OF THE
State of North Carolina
 Taken by the Subscribers
 as respectfully dedicated
 By their humble Servants
John Swain
John Swain
 1808

EXPLANATION
 County Lines
 in 1791
 in 1800
 in 1810
 in 1820
 in 1830
 in 1840
 in 1850
 in 1860
 in 1870
 in 1880
 in 1890
 in 1900
 in 1910
 in 1920
 in 1930
 in 1940
 in 1950
 in 1960
 in 1970
 in 1980
 in 1990
 in 2000
 in 2010
 in 2020

information you desired, was to apply to the Secretary of State, whose business it was to be informed on such points. I therefore addressed a letter to him, and stated the facts without mentioning any names⁴⁴ and requested his advice & opinion on the subject & the best mode of seeking redress. His answer I enclose you, from it I suppose you will have to wait to have that Claim adjusted by Commissioners to be appointed, under a treaty, which Mess^{rs}. Elsworth, Davie & Murray are to make with the French republic — now by Buonaparte's new Constitution become one of the most despotic Governments in Europe.

We have indirectly heard that the Envoys sailed in Barry for a port in France & no doubt they have been in Paris for some time — but no dispatches have been rec^d. from them. I think they will be well received in France & that they will be able to adjust the differences existing between the two Countries — From Buonaparte's letter to George the 3^d. he seems to be inclined to peace, [2] and it is probable, that the answer he rec^d. from the British Minister Lord Grenville, will induce him to make peace with Austria & settle in an Amicable manner the dispatches with us — As to Austria he can easily bribe the Emperor to a peace by giving up the Electorate of Bavaria, in lieu of Flanders, as he formerly did part of Venice, for his Italian Dominions — and if those two powers agree on this subject no other power in Europe can say nay. If thus should be the Case, England will be left alone in the War, and France will be enabled to pay attention to her Marine, which her immense land armies, which she has been obliged to keep up to defend herself, against the attacks of the combined powers, has occasioned her to neglect⁴⁵ —

You know that the Captains in our navy were appointed for their fighting & not for their writing qualities — perhaps, if they had precise instructions as to the letters they should write, they might then be as to the engagement as *mal a propos*, as Truxton's⁴⁶ — I should rather see a bungling of a well fought Battle, than an elegant description of a Captains running away — I would always prefer the New-England Captain, who did not un-

⁴⁴ Timothy Pickering was ending his term as Secretary of State, as he was discharged from the office on May 10, 1800, by Adams for disloyalty to the President. An arch-Federalist, he was an old Blount enemy, Masterson, *William Blount, passim*. Pickering undoubtedly suspected who Spaight's "friend in North Carolina" was, although Spaight wrote "without mentioning any names."

⁴⁵ Spaight, like the Blounts, was a Jeffersonian Republican, and although he deplored the new French "despotic" government, he was anti-English, if not pro-French.

⁴⁶ Thomas Truxton (1755-1822), the American naval hero, had on February 1-2 fought his famous engagement with the French warship "La Vengeance" in which he was victorious though the French ship escaped. He was a voluminous but apparently not a felicitous writer. *Dictionary of American Biography*, XIX, 21-22; Allen, *Naval War*, 163-166, 175-177.

derstand acc^{ts}. but brought the owner the profit of the Voyage in Cash in one of his boots, to the one they placed in his room, who brought them handsome, well drawn acc^{ts}. & no Cash, but on the Contra the owners in debt on the Voyage.

I wrote you yesterday, I am with Esteem

Dear Sir,

Your most Ob^t. Ser^t.

Rich^d. Dobbs Spaight

J^{no} Gray Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r

Washington

N^o: Carolina

Free

Rich^d: D. Spaight

[*enclosure*]

Department of State

March 29, 1800

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you, in answer to your letter of this date, that I do not know of any way in which your friend in North Carolina, whose vessel was captured and carried into St. Iago de Cuba by a French privateer, & the cargo of which was there sold, prior to condemnation, can obtain redress. We ourselves permitted the French in 1793 & 1794, to bring in prizes and to sell them in our ports, without condemnation: for the French Consuls had no right to hold courts in the United States. — The practice has been common in the Spanish ports. The Commissioners sitting in Philadelphia, under the treaty [with] Spain, never had authority to decide on *subsequent* cases: and the commission itself is now at an end.

I am with great respect,

Sir, your ob^t. serv^t.

Timothy Pickering

Honble

Richard Dobbs Spaight Esq.

Benjamin Grayson Orr⁴⁷ to William Blount

City Washington 2^d. April 1800.

William Blount Esq^r. .

Sir!

A few days ago I rec^d. from Mr. Jn^o Strother a further description of the Buncombe County Lands together with a Power of Attorney from him to Mr Jn^o T. Mason to convey as many acres as he rec^d. of dollars in Bonds or obligations bearing your signature & payable to me——So far, this is very well, but as this arrangement will not go entirely to relieve me, even if all your paper passed thr[u] my hands is subscribed for, in as much as that of David Allison individually, will still remain a heavy & oppressive burthen upon me. I have to beg of you to instruct Mr Strother to signify his consent to Mr Mason that any notes or bonds of David Allison payable to me as obligee or payee together with some notes of W^m M Biddle w^{ch}. I endorsed for Mr Allison & Joseph R. Tatem passed away for him may be rec^d. on similar terms —

I think it likely this business as relates to you [2] will succeed & it is more than probable that Hodgson of Baltimore will come into it likewise provided Mr Strother gives instructions to that effect to his attorney — at present as I observed before he tells him to receive only such paper as may be *drawn* payable to me—

I shall expect the pleasure of hearing from you in course of post & as in this business I have had & shall have a great deal of trouble & expense I trust with confidence that such paper of Mr Allison as I mentioned before Mr. Strother will soon instruct Mr. Mason to receive on the same terms as yours —

respectfully Sir

I remain Y^r. mo ob^t Serv^t

Benj Grayson Orr

Addressed: William Blount Esq^r
Knoxville
Tennessee

⁴⁷ A contractor for government supplies, Orr lived in Georgetown and later Washington, D. C., and was a friend of Federalist John Steele. He was greatly criticized for failure to provide adequate supplies for Andrew Jackson's Seminole Campaign in 1818. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 351, 359-363. W. Edwin Hemphill and R. L. Meriwether (eds.), *The Papers of John C. Calhoun* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2 volumes, 1961—), II, 499.

Francis Porie⁴⁸ to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

Tarbo°. 3rd April 1800

Mr. John Gray Blount

Sir

You will receive by Mr. Parkers Flat Thirty Barrels Pork Mark'd F P on the head, which you will please to store for Account of John & William Bell of Petersburg, and acknowledge the receipt of the same by return of the Flat in so doing you will Oblige

Your humble serv^t.

F. Porie

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r
Merchant
Washington

[enclosure]

These are to certify that I have Inspected For Francis Porie Thirteen barrells pork as the Law directs marked F. P.

James Southerland

Tarboro, 3rd. April 1800

These are to certify that I have Inspected For Francis Porie seventeen barrells pork agreeable to Law

Tarborough 18th March, 1800

[James Winchester⁴⁹ to John Gray Blount, Copy]

Crag Font April 5th. . 1800 —

Sir

As the subject of this Letter is interesting to a considerable number of people whose Lands & property will be injured by the operation of the direct Tax law, in the collection of the Tax, un-

⁴⁸ A neighbor and close friend of Thomas Blount in Tarboro. Thomas to John Gray Blount, August 7, 1800, in this volume.

⁴⁹ A prominent early settler, Indian fighter, and political leader of Tennessee. Winchester lived at Cragfont, about eight miles northeast of Gallatin, Tennessee, on the road from Nashville to Knoxville. John T. Moore and A. P. Foster, *Tennessee, The Volunteer State, 1769-1923* (Chicago, Nashville: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 4 volumes, 1923) II, 264; Haywood, *Natural and Aboriginal History*, 113.

less the law is so amended previous to the collection as to afford relief to them, I have thought it advisable to write you to the end that relief may be had in due time by Visiting a power in Commissioners or some other person in this State to correct errors in the returns & apportionment of the Tax heretofore made.

The law requires the owner of Lands to make return thereof in the [S]tate where he lives, and says that Transcripts of such land as he may own in another State shall be transmitted to the commissioners of the State where the land is Situate — The law also authorizes the assessors to assess and return such lands in there respective Assessment districts as have not been returned if they know the owner thereof — I have been informed that some persons residing in North Carolina and owning lands here, have made return of them in that State, which returns have not reached here, and those lands or a considerable part of them have also been assessed and returned by the Assessors here — on which last named returns the Commissioners here have made the apportionment of the Tax & the lists are in the hands of the collectors — In many cases the assessors here have made inaccurate returns, to-wit, they have made return of some lands, to which the Indian claim is not extinguished — made return of some in Sumner County which is situate in Davidson, & which possibly may also have been assessed and returned by the assessors in that County — they have assessed and returned land granted to A. and by him sold in part to B. and the remaining part to C. prior to the passing the direct Tax law. B^s. agent returned his part, & the assessors of the district where the land lies, assessed and returned C^s. part, & it may be that C. who does not live within 200 miles of that land, tho in this State, returned his part to the assessors of the district where he lives[.] in that case the land is Taxed as the property of A. as the property of B. in part, and C. is twice charged with the Tax on his part — they have assessed and returned lands Located say for example in Davidson county which location was afterwards removed and Located in Sumner county & there granted and the proprietor charged with the Tax on the land in Each place[.] the foregoing cases are so numerous that it would seem as if Justice dictated the propriety of an amendment of the law as spedily as possible — The commissioners of this State closed their business so long before North Carolina, that they received no Transcripts of lands situate here, and owned by persons residing there, before they made there returns

to your office, and from the former connexion of this State with that, a considerable quantity of land here is owned by people residing there—

[unfinished]

Thomas Brown⁵⁰ to John Gray Blount

Ashwood⁵¹ [Bladen County] Ap^l. the 14th: 1800

Dr. Sir/

I have waited for Some Time for An opportunity to write You but as few people travels from this to Washington I Must write by Post concerning Your Land; late the Property of John Gibbs; I had it rented two Years for Twenty Doll^s. the first year and forty D^o. the Second Year [.] the first Rent I have Re^d. the Second I Expect I Must Sue for as Beatye the Purchessor at Harveys Sale has took Possession of the Land and has asked the tenant to Not Pay the rent; I am a little Suppris^d. You let them remain so long in Peasible possession after Harveys Conduct⁵² to me[.] when I Made him a tender of the Mony for the Tax of that Land which was before and after the Sale and when I found he would Not raise the Money[,] I then beg^d. him to let that Land be the last Sold for I understood You had Sold it to a M^r. Robinson; he Swore then that Land Should be the first he would Sell let the Consequence be what it May and I Understood that was the case[;] he Acknowledged he had recev^d. Seventeen or Eighteen Pounds from You in lieu of the Tax for that Land as you had directed him by the Hands of John Andres but he would not appropriate the Mony that way but would Give You Credit for it in you[r] General Taxes;

I rec^d. of Letter Some time Past Informing me You had Spoke to An Attorney [2] at the Superior Court at Newbern to attend to a Sute of M^{rs}. Dewy brought by me in her life time In the Name of the Ex^s. of Ogdon upon A Bond given by Thomas Williams and Bassle Smith to the Ogdons and Assign^d to M^{rs} Dewey[;] which I was advis^d. to do by M^r Moore My Attony or I first Sent. them to Wilmington in the Name of Euphemea Dewy but M^r.

⁵⁰ A prominent citizen of Bladen County. See Blount to Thomas Brown, October 23, 1798, in this volume.

⁵¹ South of the Cape Fear River, close to Converse Creek, and southeast of Elizabeth, North Carolina. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, map opposite page 64.

⁵² See Blount to General Thomas Brown, October 23, 1798; Blount to Francis Harvey, November 18, 1798; and Amos Johnston to Richard Blackledge, March 3, 1799, in this volume.

Moo[re] advise^d. me to with Draw the sute and Sue as abov[e] mention^d: I have had a great deal of Trouble with that Bond for Mr^s. Dewey[,] was Oblige[d] to Suffor two Non sutes in Your Courts owing to B. Smiths Conduct[,] who denied he Assig^d. the bond [.] as the witness W^m. Granjer I beleave was dead and perhaps a Mr Gram was the other that Saw Williams Sign; but Perhaps Not Smith and As he was the Only living witness we Could Not Prove the han^d. writing and this s^d. Mr. Smith took the advantage of it. I under stood by Mr. Moore he had Spoke to You on the Subject; but the Bond will Shew You what I have Mention^d: by looking at it which is a well known fact, if you have Any Doubts about it, do Write or if You have been at Any Expence I will Most Chearfully Pay it; amediately on the Recp^t. of your letter.

I Am with Sentiments of
Esteem You[r] Friend and
Very Humble S^t
Tho^s. Brown

Addressed: John Blount Esq^r:

Washington
N Carolina

P^r Post

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarb^o. 15th April 1800

Dear Sir,

Your Letter of yesterday was rec^d. this Evening when our Sister & Nancy escorted by the Col.⁵³ arrived in safety — I presume your Evidence will be safe in the care of William Orr & that his appearance will answer a valuable purpose. by Reading I shall be able to inform you whether Sessums is disposed to deal with you for Porter⁵⁴ & to tell you the Cash prices of Pork, Tobacco & Corn — but as Mr Hudson,⁵⁵ who has all the articles for sale, is now with you I suppose you are already informed — indeed I

⁵³ "Our sister . . . the Col." "Our sister" refers to Anne Harvey, John Gray Blount's widowed sister. Nancy was William Blount's daughter. "The Col." was probably a slave. Mary Blount to Susannah Harvey, September 26, 1796, n.193, in this volume.

⁵⁴ "Sessums . . . Porter." Solomon Sessums was a Tarboro citizen to whom John Gray Blount was trying to sell porter, a weak stout or beer. Thomas to John Gray Blount, January 6, n.7, June 5, 1800, in this volume.

⁵⁵ John Hudson, a merchant of Tarboro. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 540-541. Thomas to John Gray Blount, April 25, 1800, in this volume.

consider it probable that you & him have ere this completed a Bargain.

Tobacco has lately sold here at 19/6 V. or 7. [?] Say $\frac{3}{4}$ Doll^r. which is the Petersburg price for the best quality. & heaviest hh^{ds}. of the Crop of 1798 — this I know from M^r Sumner who has lately sold his Crop & Mine at that. [John G. L.] Schenck says that Pork is here 12 Dol^s. & Corn 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ — but I do not yet know what others [2] Say on the subject. I think you may get Hudson's Corn at that or less — perhaps at 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ Dol^s.

The Secretary of the Treasury may remit the forfeiture⁵⁶ incurred if he pleases; & if the circumstances are as you have stated them I doubt not but he will, provided they are speedily & properly stated to him.

Reading tells me that among the goods brought on this vessel there is some very good Linen at the price, that cost 2/7 Sterling — & if so I wish to get 2 Y^{ds} of it. Will you please to Chuse them for [m]e?

We are all well & offer to you & your family our Love, Comp^{ts}. &c.

Y^{rs}

Tho. Blount

Addressed: M^r. John Gray Blount
Washington

By George

Benjamin Grayson Orr to John Gray Blount

Jn^o. Gray Blount Esq^r.

City Washington
18th April 1800.

Sir!

Yesterdays papers announce^d the distressing & much to be lamented death of your Brother Gov^r. Blount.—I shoud have been very happy that time had been allowed him in getting his affairs adjusted, to have left his family free from the consi-

⁵⁶ This is probably a reference to a customs violation by a ship owned by the Nassau firm of William and James Moss and seized for the illegal shipment of some porter into North Carolina. John Sitgreaves to Blount, April 29, 1800; and William & James Moss to Blount, June 13, 1800, in this volume. It is possible but much less likely that it refers to the seizure and condemnation by the French of the Blount ship "Grampus." Thomas to John Gray Blount, March 13, 1800, in this volume.

quences of the unfortunate Philadelphia transactions & to have enjoyed some portion of that peace & independence that he unguardedly sacrificed — Accept if you please my sincere condolence on the occasion —

On the 2^d. Inst. I wrote to the deceased [2] on the subject of the arrangements that him & myself were making to get our business adjusted wherein I requested Mr. Jn^o Strother might be instructed to receive by his attorney here any of the notes or obligations of David Allison *payable* to me & Sixteen thousand Dollars of W^m M. Biddles notes which I endorsed for Mr Allison & am liable for upon the same terms that his—W.B.s-[.] were to be received — This letter he could not have rec^d. and as the arrangement was attempted by me with a view as well to secure something for my Creditors and to releive myself as to ease & accomodate him I presumed he would readily aceed — to my request. — When at Buncombe the [3] Governor agreed to admit Biddles notes before mentioned upon my mentioning them to him but allisons I Said then nothing about —

Since then I find the taking up those obligations & such only as originally were payable to me, is essential to my complete exoneration & you know a partial one is only an agravation of the evil[.] I have one Bond of \$20.000 2 notes of \$10.666.⁶⁷. another bond of \$17.000 or thereab^{ts} & another note of £2120.——* which with Biddles \$16.000 & the bonds in which your Brother was joint oblijo^r with Allison make up a or sum of \$264.019. ²⁰/₁₀₀ thereabouts which is without Interest or costs of Suits ag^t. me — I have now Sir! to request of you what I first did of your Brother[,] that Mr John Strother be instructed to write to his attorney Mr Mason [4] to receive the notes or bonds recapitulated in the foregoing pages in payment for the Buncombe County Land upon the same terms as that of the late W. B. — ts — Your answer will be thankfully rec^d. & expected in course of post—

I am Sir
respectfully
Y^r. obed^t Serv^t
Benj Grayson Orr

Washington N^o Carolina

* Illegible.

*Nathaniel Pendleton to John Gray Blount*New York April 22^d. 1800

Dear Sir

I should sooner have answered your favor of the 22^d Ult^o. but I waited til I could have time to look among some of my old papers relative to your claim on Mr Low's Estate.⁵⁷ I have not been able to refresh my memory on the Subject from such examination. I remember the papers were put into the hands of D. B. Mitchel Esquire⁵⁸ who is now a Judge in Georgia, of which I informed either your brother or Col^o. [Benjamin] Hawkins (for both of them wrote to me on the Subject) at the time. I have since that given one of them a Statement on the Subject, but I do not recollect [2] which. Judge Mitchell will be able to give you some information on the Subject.

I am Dear Sir

very Respectfully

Your obedient Serv^t.Nath^l. Pendleton

Honble

Mr Blount

Addressed: Honble

Mr. Blount

Washington N. C.

*Walter Simpson⁵⁹ to John Gray Blount*Balt^{re} April 23. . 1800

Dr Sir

When I wrote to you last November it was my intention not to purchase any Shingles on my own account, but to depend intirely on you for a Supply, not hearing from you in the course of the Winter it was natural for me to conclude my proposition

⁵⁷ This letter refers to a note of one Captain William J. Davies to Nathaniel Pendleton (also unidentified) and endorsed by William Blount. Upon Davies' failure to pay, William Blount was sued as endorsee. See David B. Mitchell to Stephen Blount, May 2, 1801, in this volume.

⁵⁸ David B. Mitchell was a strong anti-Yazoo man and follower of Governor James Jackson of Georgia. He was Mayor of Savannah, Judge of the Superior Court, member of the Georgia Senate, United States District Attorney, and Governor of Georgia (1809-1813, 1815-1817). William Omer Foster, Sr., *James Jackson: Duellist and Militant Statesman, 1757-1806* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1960), *passim*, especially 169. Hereinafter cited as Foster, *Jackson*. E. Merton Coulter, *Georgia: A Short History* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960), 208, 239, 241, 500.

⁵⁹ Unidentified.

was not agreeable to you, in consequence of which I began to purchase this Spring on my own Account and have now a considerable Quantity on hand[.] I cannot therefore receive any consignment from you as it would be out of my power to do you that Justice the business requires as long as I have Shingles in the Yard of my Own — You would find it to your Advantage to pay Attention to the directions I gave you in my last respecting the size of Shingles and the manner of sending them to Market, sending the long and Small mixt will allways hurt the sale, I have purchased Capt^t. William Williams' load, it will take him near three days to unload, if they had been sent in the manner I recommended it would be done in less than one day, a great number of the Shingles is made o[f]* rotten wood, and a large number is Knotty and if you will send 2 feet Shingles conformable to the law I will endeavor to purchase all that Captⁿ Fletcher brings and give the Market price when they arrive

I am Yours
Walter Simpson

Addressed: Mr John G Blount
Washington

Willie Blount to John Gray Blount

Knoxville April 23^d. 1800.

Dear Sir,

I wrote you a few days ago by Mr. Strother the inclosed letter has come to hand Since he left here — Cash is so scarce here that it is almost impossible to get it for land — I suppose^d money would be useful to you, and when I was at Cumberland would have sold any of your land for prompt payment and altho' I was very anxious and of course made a number of inquiries as to purchasers could hear of none except Joseph Phillips who wishes to purchase Harriss part of Lanier's tract and his terms I made known to [Edward] Harris by Mr. Battle which probably you have seen — I will however do what I can towards your aid — if I was certain I could sell land I would notwithstanding the situation of the family at present venture to be absent from Home a

* Obscured by seal.

few weeks — I know nothing of your allusion as to L^d. G — ville's land⁶⁰—I do not know whether a settlement was ever made with the Donelsons by W^m. B[lount] I cannot find any accounts or papers relative to [David] Allison & Ball,⁶¹ tho' the fact is I have not looked over the papers since my return from Nashville, but I do not recollect ever to have seen any — In October 1798 I wrote you from Lexington in Kentucky and wished to know whether Col. [Thomas] Hart was to be allowed interest on the moneys by him advanced Col. Salter's estate meaning the Henderson & C^o. lands — he claimed & I refused it until I heard from you which I have not yet done—Gen.^l. Hopkins informs me money is necessary for expenses incurred in the division of the Greene river lands and wishes to know when he may expect it — I wish to know first how I am to get it — if from a sale of any of those [2] lands I should have a special power to sell, perhaps if the power should have a cause of substitution I could sell more readily — had I not been obliged to return from Cumberland sooner than I intended I should have had it in my power to have forwarded to you a full statement of your lands but whether satisfactory or not I am not so certain — I intended to have gone on and examined each tract from which I could give you a better idea than from vague information as to the value — I have found that several of your warrants have been located for other people, but can find no warrants, perhaps they are filed in the Secretary's office at the return of the works of survey — will send you a copy of the locations — Please make mine & the family's compliments acceptable to your family and other friends — I am as usual

Willie Blount

John G. Blount Esqr.

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire

Merchant

Washington

North Carolina

⁶⁰ Probably a reference to the pre-emption granted to Henderson and Company's settlers on the lands formerly held by Lord Granville. The Blounts were interested in the Transylvania Company for themselves and as heirs of the senior Jacob Blount's wife, a daughter of Edward Salter. See Blount to John Salter, August 8, 1797, n.69, in this volume; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 35-37.

⁶¹ Joseph Ball furnished certificates for Allison's (and William Blount's) speculations. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 602-606; Benjamin Woods to Blount, December 29, 1800, in this volume.

Via Wythe Court —
 House,⁶² Austin — ville —
 Grayson Court-House German-town⁶³ in
 North Carolina, Salem, Hillsboro, thence
 by Raleigh to Washington

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarborough 25th Ap^l. 1800

Dear Sir,

Mr. Hudson sold the Corn he had at Washington when you saw him, at the price you offer, to Cap^t. Ross—but he still has at this place the quantity you want & would take for it the price you offer if he could get it down, but there being no Boat here, at this time, he is not able to say when he shall be able to send it down & therefore he will make no bargain. He is the only man of this place that has so large a quantity of Corn so much at command — others have larger quantities up the River but at present the water is low & it is quite uncertain when they will be able to get it down. If I had an Invoice of your Goods perhaps I might be able to get 3 hh^d. good Tob^o. from Pouree on the Terms you mentioned — but he cannot spare time to come to Washington on so trifling a Business [2] as he is obliged to go to Halifax — He is the only man here who has Tob^o. that he is disposed to exchange for Goods. I mentioned Linen & Stockings to you because Reading mentioned them as being very good at their cost, but you say they are course, & if they are I do not want either[.] If Nancy Harvey should like the Linen sent by Brennan she may have it & will take it—she appears to be in great distress arising from the difficulty of procuring suitable black Dresses for herself & Nancy Blount.⁶⁴ She sent a mem^o. by Reading to you &

⁶² Wytheville, Virginia. The letter was directed along a mail route that followed the Middle Fork of the Holston, joined the Wilderness Road below Abingdon, Virginia, proceeded northeast to Wytheville, then went southeast to Austinville (below Foster's Falls, Virginia). Following the valley of the New River, the route then led from Grayson Court House (now Independence, Virginia) to Germanton, North Carolina. F. Lucas, Jr., "North Carolina," in H. C. Carey and I. Lea, *A Complete Historical, Chronological, and Geographical Atlas . . .* (Philadelphia: H. C. Carey and I. Lea, 1822), No. 23; *Hammond's New Supreme World Atlas* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1962), 108; Edgar B. Wesley, *Our United States: Its History in Maps* (Chicago: Denoyer Geppert Company, 1955), 32.

⁶³ Germanton. Formerly (1790-1849) the county seat of Stokes County. Robinson, *North Carolina*, 396.

⁶⁴ The sister (Anne Blount Harvey) and daughter (Anne Blount) of William Blount were both called "Nancy" by the family. They were seeking mourning clothes because of William's death. John Summerville to Thomas Blount, March 27, 1800; and Anne Harvey to Mrs. John Gray Blount, May 11 [1800], in this volume.

wishes to know whether it can be complied with — if it cannot she must send to Halifax or Petersburg — for not an article that she wants can be had here — & if she must send she says she must have Cash. I shall go to Halifax on Sunday next — We are all in tolerable Health & send Love, Comp^{ts} &^c. &^c.

I remain

Y^{rs}

Tho. Blount

Addressed: Mr John Gray Blount
Washington

fav^d by
Cap^t. Ross

Henry Bettner⁶⁵ to John Gray Blount

New-Bern April 26th. 1800

Sir

Yesterday was found upon a Run-away Negroe Boy of mine, a Note directed to me, dated the 22nd. instant, signed with your Name, and, (I have reason to believe) was written by yourself; The purport of which did amaze me — and on investigation of this busness, my wonder still grew, when I learned, this drowsy dull-looking Boy, had had the Address to frame a good plan & execute it — excite the compassion of a Mechanicks Son, to write him a Pass and Letter too — for I had this white Boy before me, and he declared, he did it not for the Shilling the negroe gave him, but for pity sake, for the negroe told him with Tears, that the Night before, his Master dispatched him with a Letter and Pass for Washington, & gave him Money enought to pay ferriage and Vituals, but he had fell in compaignie with a certain Chap who made him merry—& got him drunk—left his Letter & Pass and dares't not come Home; but, he knew the Erran he was sent on, and could do it without the Letter, but he feared people would stop him; therefore the Negroe offered him his last shilling to write for him, which he did, not thinking of any harm—

⁶⁵ Henry Bettner (d. 1809) is unidentified except as a New Bern merchant. *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, July 13, 1809.

The curiosity of all which has induced me to take the Liberty to detail to you, and ask pardon for the trouble the Boy has given. I am with great esteem

Sir
Your humble Servant
Henry Bettner

John G. Blount Esq^r.
Addressed: John G [Blount Esq^r]*

John Sitgreaves to John Gray Blount

Halifax 29 April 1800.

Dear Sir

I have received your Letter with the papers relative to the Seizure of the Schooner True Blue⁶⁶ & have transmitted by the post which carries this the necessary orders for a restitution & appraisement with directions that the proceedings thereon may be returned to the ensuing District Court, it may perhaps be necessary that my Letter to the Collector should be delivered to him from the post office which the party concerned can attend to in order to expedite the Business — M^{rs} Sitgreaves joins me in respects to M^{rs}. Blount

I am with great regard
Your obed. servant
Jn^o: Sitgreaves

John G. Blount Esq^r.
Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r
Washington

* Manuscript torn.

⁶⁶ A Nassau firm's ship seized for customs violation. See William and James Moss to Blount, June 13, 1800, in this volume.

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarb°. 5th May 1800

Dear Sir,

Last Evening, a few minutes after my return from Halifax, Mr McWhorter arrived here with Letters from Mr [John] Strother & Willie with which he this morning proceeds to you⁶⁷ — it was intended that I should read them & I have done so, but I have not been enabled by reading them to form any opinion on the subject of them that I think would be valuable or even useful to you — yet being sensible that Willie's Letter to JG & T.B & a part of Strother's require a consultation I would come to see you to-day if I could, but I cannot, because I have foundered one Horse coming from Halifax & am obliged to lend another to Mr McWhorter — I suppose you will consult Mr Harris or some other Lawyer to know how far Willie's Letter or S[tokley]. D[onaldson]'s deposition can be useful,⁶⁸ & that if he should be of opinion that the Letter can be at all useful, you will take the measures proper for obtaining it in due time, if any such measures are in your power. It seems to be now time to determine who Shall be Counsel for us & that is a point which I leave wholly to you — I have understood from our Sister [2] that you are to come here before she starts for Tennessee,⁶⁹ & as the time when she ought to start & wishes to start is now near at hand I presume it will not be inconvenient for you to hold a consultation here, if consultation should in your opinion be necessary—but should I be mistaken in this presumption, I will attend you for that purpose when you please. My Sister's impatience has risen to great heights & she has yet seen nothing of Sharpe nor heard of her chair[.] Hudson will not contract to deliver Corn by any given day or at any stipulated price — he expects to get his Corn down by the 11th. or 12th but calculates that he will be able to get a higher price than you have offered however will take that rather than Store it. McKee it is said is now at your place with Corn for Sale, & if you can bargain with

⁶⁷ The letter from Willie Blount contained information about William Blount's death, already the subject of letters by John Summerville to John Gray and to Thomas Blount, March 27, 1800; and John Gray to [Willie Blount], May 11, 1800, n.71, in this volume.

⁶⁸ The trials in connection with the land frauds were now in prospect. Willie sent a "public" letter for use at the trial. Willie to John Gray Blount, May 26, 1800, in this volume. John Gray Blount was tried in the Superior Court in New Bern July 15, 1800, and "there the jury declared not guilty and so say all." Newbern Superior Court Minutes, 1794-1800, July term, as cited in Keith, "Three North Carolina Blount Brothers," 303. For Thomas's acquittal see transcript subjoined to Election Circular—Thomas Blount, July 25, 1800, in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

⁶⁹ Anne Harvey went to Tennessee to look after William Blount's family. Anne Harvey to Mrs. John Gray Blount, May 11 [1800], in this volume.

him it will be best to do so — Your Suit at Halifax was on the 1st. Instant determined in your favor — but the Plaintiff it is believed will not be able to pay costs [3] pray don't detain Mr McWhorter a moment longer than necessary for he rides one of my plough Horses — & if you should want me, send for me — I mean tell me so by Letter — would it be improper to publish our memorial with my motion for referring it & Willie's Letter — I ask because Mr Norfleet says our silence has had a bad effect? I [h]ope* & expect that you will be here in a [f]ew days — the att^o. General ⁷⁰ will be _____* & on Thursday next & I will probably start for Wilmington on Saturday following — he goes there certainly — have you paid him his fee in the Halifax suit? We are all well & present Love &c. to your family — tell Reading my Horses (Duns) will not answer for his journey & it will not be convenient to Jackey to spare the Phaton until the fall when he will not want it.

I remain

Yours &c

Tho. Blount

Addressed: Mr John Gray Blount
Washington

fav^d by
Mr McWhorter

John Gray Blount to [Willie Blount, draft with enclosure]

Tarb^o. May 11th. . 1800

D^r Willie

Yo[ur]† letter which conveyed the melancholy & unfortunate news of the death of our Brother William was delivered me a few days ago by Mr. M^c.Werter⁷¹ who came with Mr Strothers letters. That unexpected misfortune creates so many new difficulties that

* Manuscript torn.

⁷⁰ Blake Baker was Attorney General, and like most such State officials he had a private law practice as well as his official one. For example, see Edward Jones to Blount, May 6, 1796, in this volume.

† Illegible.

⁷¹ These letters arrived in Tarboro on May 4. Thomas to John Gray Blount, May 5, 1800, in this volume. The first news of William Blount's death should have come by John Summerville's letters of March 27, 1800, to Thomas and to John Gray, in this volume, at which time Willie Blount was in Nashville. Thomas's failure to comment on William's death when forwarding Willie's letter implies that Summerville's letters had already brought the news.

I am unprepared to remove [them] or even to arrange my own ideas respecting them.

W. B. wrote me in December last that at the next Jan^y. Term I should obtain Judgment ag^t. him as Ex^r. of David Allison on a note of Allisons to me then in his hands for 30,000\$ And at April Court J.G.B.'s & JG & TB would recover Judgment for amount of other certain notes of Allisons which they sent out by their Att^y John Strother; a recovery on the latter would be prevented by his W.B. death and Strother has sent back the notes; but I hope the other Judgment was had at January Term⁷² and that the first scire facias⁷³ to the Hiers & devisees of D.A. was returned to the last Court[.] If so & they appeared Execution may now issue against his Lands to wit Lands which he has at any time owned in that State[.] the Titles from him for which [lands] not being proved & recorded agreeably to Law[,] and I am informed that is the Case with almost all[,] and [since] your Law granting a further time [to record deeds] has expired & cannot now be renewed in almost two year[,] it⁷⁴ affords recoveries to take place provided any Person can be prevailed on to take administration debonest non⁷⁵ on David Allison[.] and that any Person will be safe to do as they can only be liable for any Property [w]hich comes to their hands in that State[,] which will be none[.] from [i.e., for] Property in one State is not assets in the hands of an Adm^r. in another State & with Lands the Adm^r. has nothing to do. [2] Such an administration will serve to receive the Suits which may be done the first Court[.] He may & must plead fully administered otherwise Exⁿ. cannot go against Lands of intestate[.] And Judg^t. may be had the first Court as is the daily practice in this state[.] And then Scire facias against Hiers & devisees to issue & if none found two returns must be made to that effect before Exⁿ. against the Lands can issue[.] See the Law 1784 Iredell⁷⁶ page 530.

If the above proceedings can be had so as to sell the Lands of D[avid]. A[llison]. before Lawful record can be made there is no doubt these sales will be good and in that Case I can secure

⁷² The judgment was rendered in January, 1800, in John Gray's favor, but no execution was obtained as late as 1813. Pleasant Miller to Blount, July 2, 1813, in John Gray Blount Papers.

⁷³ *Scire facias*. In this instance, an order to show cause why Allison's estate should not pay these judgments to the Blounts. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 1513.

⁷⁴ The existing law on the recovery of debts against estates.

⁷⁵ "*de bonis non administratis*," i.e., administration of that part of the deceased's goods not previously administered by another. *Black's Law Dictionary*, 476.

⁷⁶ James Iredell, *Laws of the State of North Carolina* (Edenton: Hodge and Wills, 1791).

myself[,] the importance of which is so great that I hope you will procure an Adm^r. to D.A. & use all possible exertions to compleat the business before any other Law authorising the recording of Deeds can be made and with that expectation send your notes as p^r. List annexed[.] W. Blounts Executor would be D. Allisons but not his Adm^r. therefore as W^m. Blount has no property it is not necessary his Ex^r. if he has any will[,] but there is none yet found[,] should quallify for I suppose it must be Tom or myself & that would exclude us from Suit agst. Allison. If W.B. has left any Property the Judgt. John Allen has against him must issue & sell it. you can purchase & distribute it in supporting & educating the Family[.] John Strother has Allens Power to give in Allens name receipts or discharges for the amount or make any other proper arrangement with that Judgt.[.] If there was or should be Judgt. obtained for me agt. Allison I want the Duck River⁷⁷ Land sold of all others If its situation is such as to justify & I believe the deeds was proved[?] before [?] —————* therefore, as it seems them are the ones granted on Duplicates & the holders at some day may come on me on my warranty[.] there is about 60 M Acres perhaps Strother will if informed purchase them in for me[.][3] You will receive herewith the will of M[rs] Granger to which you are an Executor & the only one which can at present act[,] the property all being where you are and the witnesses all dead or supposed to be so except Reading Blount[.] if he is dead or out of the State I suppose you must quallify with the will annexed unless the proving by —————* hand writing will do[.] but I suppose that will do as the mear finding it amongst her valuable papers would pass [*i.e.*, prove it to be] personal property

All that part of your Letter which respects Lands I am unable to give particular answer to or about the Taxes; can only say that amongst the papers & directions to Harris which he left with you there was an Acct of all Lands we claim there as well as I recollect also an account of Warrants missing & of Lands granted to others which we had purchased[,] some of the Warrants transfered & others not[,] which we have not been able to procure Deeds for[,] they must if possible be sold for Taxes[.] with that List of Lands & my returns for Taxation [(] which must before now be to hand[)] you must ratify the best you can our direct Taxes [(]I believe the present Congress have

⁷⁷ A tributary of the Tennessee River in west central Tennessee.

* Illegible.

passed a Law which gives power to the Com^{rs}.[] And out of the Lands pay the Taxes[;] And if possible raise a few Thousand Dollars but be sure before a sale to be well advised of the value

As to the vague Locations I suppose if the Lands can be found without a claim on them & more particularly located the Title would be good enough but where the Title is doubtful or vague or the warrant lost the locator who must have had the Warrant cannot hesitate to take such in their part for locating because there are things it became their business to take care of

In the present deranged state of that business there it might be dangerous to convey land therefore put it off as long as you can I will think on the subject & write you fully. [4] W. B. Smiths answer to Gen^l. Hopkins I never have seen when did you inclose it. Perhaps R——* E^r. [?] will convey you Lands of his own at some discount & take that debt[.] you may also deduct J^o. Rives part of a 5000 Acre tract located in the name of Jacob Blount on big Hatchy⁷⁸ say $\frac{1}{4}$ I believe at reduction or $\frac{1}{4}$ of a dollar p acre[.] the best way will be to get men to value the negros & the La[nds he?]*—————* He must have the Bonds or Agreements of a number of Persons for whom he located on big Hatchy[.] If he has not rec^d payment I will take them & give d^r. for the Land I receive at reduction or agree at $\frac{1}{4}$ of a Dollar p Acre for all that the people will convey me[.] We have only Harget & Cobb Title an must do the best we can with them[.] If Harris' Lenior [County] Lands will command 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ or 3\$ make arrangements to sell it for [rea]dy* Cash I have not seen Blackledge but he cannot pay his no[te to]* M^r Grainger shortly I fear.

Ja^s. Amsberry J^r. wants to sell his part of G^l [Martin] Armstrongs tract —————* River[.] his includes the only large Spring on the G^{ls}. Tract [.] [write?]* & inform me the value & if clear of incumberances[.] In a hurry & confusion I have run over most of the Subject I can think of[.] You must examine & adjust them & place each sentence where it belongs except the two most important ones[:] the one is [to provide?]* for the maintaining W^m Blounts Family & the Schooling the Child[ren.] I expect the School of adversity has taught to Molsy that econ[omy]* now so necessary & that little will be necessary

* Manuscript obscured by repair.

⁷⁸ The Big Hatchey (Hatchie) River is a tributary of the Mississippi in extreme western Tennessee. The Blount lands there were extensive. Samuel C. Williams, *The Beginnings of West Tennessee* (Johnson City, Tennessee: The Watauga Press, 1930), maps facing 132-133, 200-201, and *passim*, especially 143, 146, 153.

to maintain them [more than]* can be made by the negroes. And from some sources as much mus[t be]* raised as will School them all particularly the Boys[.] As I [am] so much pushed here nothing can be expected from me and if it cannot be done without[,] sacrificies must be mad[e to][5] accomplish that of all others to our Brother in his life time the most desirable[.] Molsy must give up to you the Boys & they must go the best Schools & have an education The other is the duplicate business which has made so much noise & for which Tom & myself are to be in June say about the 10th. tryed for high Crimes & misdemeanors[.] M Strother says he has heard something about a Letter I have written to Armstrong on that subject but of that I have no recollection but it may be so[,] for I am sure that if W. Blount or [Stockly] Donelson had either of them requested such a thing I should have done so supposing they were compleatly masters of the Subject & would request nothing improper & the business of Lands in that country being under their sole management. On speaking on the Subject to Tom Blount he says that David Allison on first hearing the Report observed that S. Donelson had applied to the Assemy of NC. on his Fathers being kill'd & represented that Warrants were lost had obtained a Resolution authorizing Armstrong to issue Duplicates but of this I have no recollection[.] pray do ask Col^o. Donelson if he has any knowledge of that subject also if to his knowledge either Tom Blount or myself had any knowledge of or agency in the obtaining Grants on the duplicate Warrants[.] ⁷⁹ let some Person be present who will certify on Oath what he says And could this be to hand in time I would beg of you to come to the Court at Raleigh to declare what you know which could only corroborate other explanetary proof for we cannot prove a negative [.] I repeat again pray collect from Donelson all [6] he will tell (for it is not to be expected he will tell anything against himself) and inform me by the 10th. June to Raleigh

pray communicate to me by Letter by some safe hand all you know respecting W.B business with [James] King & all others as accident may happen to you or others which may if possible worst[?] his affairs.

As that is a new Country the face of which will be in a few years wholly changed [,] I hope you will procure to be engraved on some lasting Stone his name age &c. which will for a time

* Manuscript obscured by repair.

⁷⁹ See Willie to John Gray Blount, May 26, 1800, in this volume.

point out the place of his interment[.] You will also please offer to Molsy the most sincere condolence of Polly & myself[;] I would have written here but my mind is too much embarrassed with a variety of subjects to sooth hers by any observations I can make

I am Your affectionate Brother

[enclosure]

List of 5 Notes sent to Willie Blount by John Gray Blount 11th May 1800 — Viz^t

1 Note dated 31 July 1794 payable at 3 years from	Dollars
David Allison to John G & Tho. Blount - - - - -	95,000
1 Note dated 31 July 1794 payable at 3 years from	
David Allison to John G & Tho. Blount - - - - -	55,000
I Note dated 9 th Feb ^y . 1795 payable at 4 years from	
David Allison to John Gray Blount - - - - -	19,840
I Note dated 10 th June 1795 payable at 3 years from	
David Allison to John Gray Blount - - - - -	12,500
I Note date 10 th June 1795 Payable at 4 years from	
David Allison to John Gray Blount - - - - -	25,000
	<hr/>
	\$207.340
	<hr/>

Anne Harvey to Mrs. John Gray Blount

Tarborough May 11th [1800]

Dear Sister,

I received your Letter by my Brother for which I thank you— The bundle & Letters for your sons I hope to have the pleasure of delivering with my own hands as our Worthy Traveling Companion is desirous of going that way[.] ⁸⁰ if any thing Should turn up to prevent our doing so you may depend it shall be sent safe to them, I was at M^r Burrows last evening when my Brother John [Gray] came up, & I was fritened almost in on ague, to see him come through such a rainny day to serve me, I was afraid

⁸⁰ Blount's sons Thomas Harvey and John Gray were at the University in Chapel Hill, and Anne Blount Harvey was going to Knoxville with William Blount's daughter, Nancy, to be with his widow, Mary Grainger Blount, and family. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxx; Thomas to John Gray Blount, January 6, 1800, in this volume.

he would get his Death by it, the trouble my Journey has given him in perticular, & others of the family has given me no small shear of uneasyness & after all their trouble to start me I very much fear I shall have but Little Satisfaction in the trip, but I thought it was best to go & I am fully determind to make the best of all things on our Journey & through the summer & Journey back again in the fall—Nancy Blount has sent her ring to Mr G[rove] Wright for to get hair put in it of her Fathers & Mothers thare was only M B in it before[.] Sharpe Blount had it in charge to give him. Nancy has forgotten wheather she directed having the W in it or not she wishes you to tell him[,] as you will Certainly see him before he goes to New York[,] to have W M B put in her Ring, she is not as well as when she came home I fear she will not stand traveling well—I hope you or my Brother will let us hear from you all as often as your can during our Stay at Knoxville[.] Nancy joins me in Love to you & all your family also Mrs. Neale & Polly[.] ⁸¹ have wanted to see you & all the Children very much[.] Kiss Harriot & Olivia for me & tell Polly Anne⁸² I hope to see her very much improved[.] I have not a doubt but I shall see her so, as she promised me to be very industrious in getting her Education Compleated this summer—
A due D Sister

Anne Harvey

tell W[illiam] A[ugustus]⁸³ I shall
not forget to tell
his aunt Blount's
Little Cousins what
a good & clever boy
he is Att
my Brother will tell you all about this peice of Silk[.] if he should forget it Mrs Ingals has 8 yrds at 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ pr ———* yrd[.] its 2 inches more than third[?] of a yrd if you Like the coulour you will [not] meet a better Bargin[.] Mrs Jones has one of it & its thought very frilly

⁸¹ Probably Abner Neale's family. Abner Neale to Blount, February 5, 1796, n.35, in this volume.

⁸² "Harriot . . . Polly Anne." Harriot, Olivia, and Polly Anne were John Gray Blount's daughters. Wheeler, *Reminiscences*, lx; *Second Census: 1800*, Washington, Beaufort County.

⁸³ Another son of John Gray Blount. Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*, I, 36.
* Illegible.

*Stephen Blount⁸⁴ to John Gray Blount*Savanah 16th. [May?] 1800

Dear Sir —

Your kin^d fav^r. of the 22^d. de^r. 1799 came to Hand 2 or 3 Weeks ago, since which, Have not Had any certain, or safe conveyance, for an answer untill the present by Captⁿ. Camron who shew me a memorandum from you relative to the business you wrote me on, Shou^d have gone in myself only for business of Importance, that demanded my presence Here, Inclosed my good Sir, are such proofs, of the neagroe Cupid being the lawfull property of the estate of Edw:^d Fitzjarl decs^d as I Hope Will be Suficient to Justify your delivering the said neagroe, as well paying the amount claimd in my affadavit, for Hire & detention of Him, in justice to the orphans, I should Have Augmented the Wage of the neagroe, in proportion to the enhance^d Value of labour in this part of the country, but did not know, How far the laws of your State, might authorize my doing it, However Sir, you can inform me by letter, which will thank you to do, wheather I can with propriety (consistant with your laws) lay in an additional Claim for the detention of s^d neagroe, agreeable to the advanced Value of labour Here, if so, be pleased at the same time, to inform me the necessary Vouchers & proofs, to establish the s^d advance, it may be (in order to inable you to judge better on the business) properly to inform you, that I Hired this neagroe Cupid to s^d Doctr. M^c. Kenzee⁸⁵ on the 15th. June 1794 at the Wages of ten pounds Sterling for one year, at the experation of s^d. period the Doctr. was to return me the neagroe, & pay the wages, & during which term, was not to take the s^d neagroe beyond the limits of South Carolina, since which time, Have neither seen the doct^r, negroe, or wages, then cant I, with propriety, & ought I not in justice to the [2] Orphans, claim the use, agreeable to the annual progression of the labour of neagroes Have, in proportion to the abilities of the fellow Cupid[?] I Shall be Govern^d. Sir by your opinion relative to any pursuit for augmentation[.] Will esteem it an additional fav my good sir, if you conceive the s^d proofs Suficient to authorize your delivering the neagroe &

⁸⁴ A lawyer of Savannah, Georgia. See D. B. Mitchell to Stephen Blount, May 2, 1801; Stephen Blount to John Gray Blount, July 11, 1800, in this volume; *Raleigh Register* and Stephen Blount to John Gray Blount, July 11, 1800, in this volume. No kinship with the Tar River Blounts has been established.

William MacKenzie was already deceased; the Blount's friend died on September 27, 1810.

⁸⁵ Possibly the father of the Blount friend William MacKenzie of Martin County. This *North Carolina State Gazette*, October 4, 1810; "Census 1790," in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 725.

wages claim^d to forward Him & the said amt with interest (if the Law with you allows ints^t on open acct) by the first Vessel bound for this port — taking An^d inclosing the captans recpt^t to me by post, & a duplicate by the Vessell. Should the interest not be admissable by your laws, please send me the principle, as the orphans present Situation need it — Should the s^d proofs not be suficient to authorize or Justify the delivery &^c Will thank you to let me know wherein the deficiency of the proof consists, as I may be able to procure the needfull — & forward — Be pleased Sir to Accept my sincere thanks, for your polite & kind attention to this business —

And in the mean time believe me with fervent wishes for your Health & Prosperity

Your Sincere friend & Very Humb^l Servt —
Stephen Blount.

Addressed: Mr. . John G. Blount
p Capt.
Camron

Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount

Edenton May 19th. 1800

Dear Sir,

Jonathan Price was here during the Superiour Court, and promised me to make out a statement, of the nature of the Claim which the persons in possession of a Part of Eliza's⁸⁶ land in Pasquotank set up, and was to have started for Philadelphia in a few days after he left this, I saw him last week at Perquimans Court he had not then made out the statement tho he again promised to do it before he goes, which he said would be in a few days tho I think he will not go at all [.] he said he was then waiting for a little money which he was likely to get in a few days but did not say of Whom, if you write Strother you may inform him, for he no doubt by what he said to me expects Price is now in Philadelphia, I do not believe he will go at all, all well and Join in Comp^{ts} to all yours &c

Jacob Blount

⁸⁶ Probably Susannah Harvey Blount's daughter by her first marriage, hence Jacob Blount's step-daughter. Stuart Hill Papers (typed, 4 volumes, State Library, Raleigh), I, 150, hereinafter cited as Hill Papers. Her father left her a ward of John Gray Blount. Jacob to John Gray Blount, August 16, 1800, in this volume. Note of S. Hendrickson to Peter Barbayge, January 1, 1803, in John Gray Blount Papers.

P. S. when Carter the Sail maker was at Washington with Mr Tredwell he was solicited to set up a loft in your place, which he will do, if you think it worth while, his Brother is a good workman I suppose [.] he is lately mooved here from Philadelphia and if you are in want of a Sail Maker will come over and set up [his]* Business he only waits your answer

JB

Free

Addressed: Mr. John Gray Blount
Washington

John Wallace to John Gray Blount

John G. Blount Esq.^r.

Shell Castle May 22^d. . 1800

D^r Sir

I have purchased the Flounder for us of Ross, for Eight hundred & thirty Two-Dollars & a half for her boat & the Old boat, which is to be paid in Lighterage & pilotage, part of which is already paid; She Comes up now for the first business to bring down — Taylors House, or whatever part She can bring and the rest She will bring at some other time or some other lighter. How continues in her, victuals and mans her for One half of what is Made in her as he did with Cap^t Ross[.]if we have not a plenty of Lightering for her to do after this business we will put her to carrying Shingles to the Federal City, Baltimore, or Elsewhere, & Bringing Stone Ballast back She will carry two hundred Thousand of your Longer Shingles at least.—You with Cap^t Ross will do what is necessary with her papers at — Washington.

I have for this Thirty days past Generally been from home after Our Logs[.] I have now got One hundred down at the Castle and the other hundred is carting down, which will be ready in the Course of a Fornight to bring down: That Quantity will compleat Our business. I have a Thousand other Things to write but have not Time. [2] But must request of you to Inform me, near what time you can be down, and think (as we have got to much business On hand) if the office (as it is much better fitted than when you were down before, with a good piazza) will do

* Word obscured by seal.

for you, and we have a good Kitchen that will Serve for all cooking &c we can have Our writing and all Our business done in Mayo's house Or the Generals On the wharf.⁸⁷

I expect the Caleb every day, but have not heard from her, should she not come in the course of a Fornight, or three weeks, I will write to you to have her Insured, & furnish you with bill of Lading to the Am^t of property, should she come with a Load of Salt I shall want to land it here, as Cap^t Taylor says he will permit it be done & secure the duties. We are all well at the Castle with respects to you and family & all friends and remain.

Dr Sir Your Most Obed^t

Hbl^e Serv^t.

John Wallace

Addressed: Jn^o G Blount Esqr.

Merchant

Washington

Cap How[ard]

Sharpe Blount to John Gray Blount

Greeneville 25th. May 1800—

Dear Sir, John Coart has delivired the fifty Barrels corn & I have sold it to Joel Patrick at 22/6 per barrel but have not delevered it, what shall I do with the money when I receive it We are all well &c

Yours &c

Sharpe Blount

Addressed: Mr. John G Blount

Washington

fav^d. by Mr. }

P. . Smith }

⁸⁷ Blount, as he had done in previous years, was planning to move to Shell Castle for the summer to escape the fevers prevalent in the North Carolina lowlands. See Blount to Robert Morris, August 25, 1797, in this volume. "The General" is unidentified.

*Willie Blount to Jacob Blount*Knoxville May 25th. . 1800

Dear Sir,

I had the satisfaction to receive a letter from your hand by Mr Shad, Letter by which I became acquainted with him — I gave him letters to some of my friends at Cumberland and he has this day returned from there, says he had but little difficulty in transacting his business to his satisfaction — He saved his land and thinks it good and the title clear of dispute — From your letter last fall I intended to have obtained full information respecting this land before I left Cumberland and transmitted it to you for the information of the owners, had I not been obliged to return to this place sooner than I expected in consequence of the death of our brother W^m. . Blount who died of a bilious fever on the 21st day of March after a short illness, say seven days — I was at Cumberland when I heard of his death & was never more Shocked than when I received the news — I was the more so because I had received a letter but a short time before from him informing me of the good health of himself and family — could he have lived a few years longer it would have been a happy thing for his family, and extremely satisfactory to his friends in general — during his illness he experienced the attention and friendship of his neighbours, & friends in as great a degree as any man ever did — My want of a knowledge of his business puts it out of my power to say in what State he left his pecuniary concerns — I do not know whether he left a will, but presume he did, if he made one, it is most probably in J. G. Blount's possession — I have written to him on the subject and expect shortly to hear his answer — I have put my Nephews William, Richard and Jacob⁸⁸ to School about ten miles from here under a good teacher — they learn with much ease to themselves any thing they attempt the Study of — Barbara goes to school in this town and is sometimes accompanied by Eliza,⁸⁹ the principle benefit children of their ages receive at school is to be kept out of mischief and free from contracting bad habits —

M^{rs} Grainger died about ten days before our brother, of nearly a similar [2] complaint — My Sister⁹⁰ and her Sons William & Jacob were sick about that time, Billy had like to have died, he

⁸⁸ Sons of William Blount. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xix, n.58.

⁸⁹ "Barbara . . . Eliza." Daughters of William Blount. Eliza, the youngest, was five years old at this time. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xix, n.58; II, 523.

⁹⁰ Willie Blount's sister-in-law, Mrs. William Blount.

was saved in all probability by very severe blistering — Knoxville was never more sickly than about that time — but our family and the inhabitants of this place in general now enjoy good health — Mr. Luten is in haste therefore I will after presenting to you & your family the compliments of ours conclude with assurances of affection

Willie Blount

Jacob Blount Esquire

Willie Blount to John Gray Blount

Knoxville May 26th 1800

Dear Sir,

Last September I borrowed of Barclay McGhee a merchant near this place 400 dollars to pay the tax on the Buncombe lands and gave him my note with Cha^s McClung security, the note payable in two months — McGhee has applied to McClung for the money but did not get it — the application to him was made while I was at Cumberland — I am very anxious that it should be paid, because it has been long due, McGhee has been very civil not only in that instance but in sundry others — and as Mr. McClung's friendship induced him to be security I do not wish his feelings to be injured by a second application — I have tried to raise the money here and shall still do it if possible, tho' I have so dull a prospect I cannot count on in any reasonable time, therefore if in your power do send it — I spoke to Mr. Strother who said he would raise it if possible, but have heard nothing from him since — Two or three days after he left here the following arrived here — I sent you a copy by the post —

[Here followed the letter of Benjamin Grayson Orr to William Blount, April 2, 1800.]

The bearer of this letter is Mr. John Hillsman a respectable citizen of this Town on his way to Richmond — He has had the goodness to say he would take charge of & deliver to you the copies of locations herewith sent — He is my very intimate friend, and knows the contents of this inclosed letter — if you think it necessary he can make known the contents of this letter from me to you, after reading it before he may declare — from what Stockley Donelson told Mr. Strother who I suppose will be

at Raleigh (to wit, that if his oath would be of any service he could swear that J. G. & T. Blount knew nothing of the issuing of the duplicates and that they were not obtained on affidavit) I do suppose it will be unnecessary for Mr. Hillsman to say any thing on the subject, but of this you can judge — Mr. Hillsman's friendly disposition and integrity entitles and insures to him the esteem of all who know him — The family are in health and desire to be remembered to you and other friends — I refer you to Mr. Hillsman for the news as I am in haste—I am,

Your Ob^t. Servant
Willie Blount

Jn^o. G. Blount Esqr.

Tell Mr Jas. C. Gorham to whom I have not time to write now that Mr. Scott his lawyer told me lately that on looking over his papers that he found the land lay in Cumberland, this he discovered after he had got a bill drawn here, & that he then put the bond and papers into the hands of Mr. Geo. W. Campbell⁹¹ a good lawyer, and that the business will be proceeded on with dispatch — Tell Mr. Geo. Green of Greenville that his land in Sumner Co[un]ty will I am afraid be Sold for the taxes — I wrote to him two or three years ago that I could not attend to it any longer — perhaps his immediate attention to this may save his land —

Addressed: [John G]ray* Blount Esquire
Raleigh
North Carolina

*Willie Blount to John Gray and Thomas Blount*⁹²

Knoxville May 26th 1800

Gentlemen,

I now send you copies of the locations and removing made on your military warrants, so far as I could obtain them from the

⁹¹ George Washington Campbell (1768-1848) was born in Tennessee and served often as a United States Representative and Senator. He was Secretary of the Treasury in 1814 and Minister to Russia, 1818 to 1821. Weymouth T. Jordan, *George Washington Campbell of Tennessee: Western Statesman*, *Florida State University Studies No. 17* (Tampa: Florida Grower Press, 1955), *passim*.

* Manuscript torn.

⁹² This letter was obviously a "public" letter written for use in the defense of John Gray and Thomas Blount at their trial. See John Gray Blount to Willie Blount, May 11, 1800; and Willie Blount to John Gray Blount [with enclosure], May 26, 1800, in this volume.

books, not knowing how often they had been located, I compared the copies taken with the dates of locations mentioned in the grants, by which I found I had not gotten them all — you have also a memorandum of the dates of such as I could not find on the Books, I had not time to make further Search, or perhaps I could have found them — The Books have been so irregularly Kept, that unless a man knows how often his warrant has been located, it is doubtful whether he can ascertain it from them — I have looked for one location half a day — These copies together with a Summary of them, will give you a more full idea of your lands than you ever have had — it will show you the number of acres for which warrants were sent out to be loc^d. — Acres loc^d. & for whom — Acres granted & to whom — Acres loc^d. for you warrants lost & you paying the taxes on the loc^{ns} — acres granted, the land taken by older loc^{ns}, the grants surrendered, loc^d. again and you paying the taxes on them — Acres disputed titles — acres for which your warrants have been loc^d. for other people — you have lost warrants, the loc^{ns} on which I have found, only to amount of 18 or 19,000 acres, the injury does not stop there because you are paying the tax on them, I have thought it best to pay the tax, as it is possible the warrants may one day or other be found — I would almost as soon undertake to copy the Bible and commit it to memory as undertake such another job, the only inducement I had to do it was because I knew you had not time yourself — after getting this but a small part of the desired information is obtained, for it will be necessary to have the lands resurveyed, interferences noted, and titles investigated, which will take a great deal of trouble, time and expence —

Some years ago perhaps in 1793 I was in the lower part of North Carolina and heard that Col. Stockley Donelson for whom I then had a friendship and still have, was in prison bounds at Hillsboro for a debt due to one S^t. Lawrence, I went to see him with a view of relieving him of his pecuniary difficulties, the sum was too large for me to advance, and without advancing it his enlargement could not be effected, and as he was surveyor for one of the Districts, I supposed that the business of many people residing within the limits of the present State of Tennessee was committed to his care, and believing he would remain in the bounds until he could receive aid from his friends & [2] connexions, I asked him if I could serve him in any of his business of that kind, he answered that he had in his possession plats of sundry surveys of land, the original warrants for which had been

so long lost or mislaid that he dispaired of ever getting them again, and had a thought of obtaining duplicates, but from his then Situation he could not go to the office himself, and that I would oblige him if I would do it for him, I answered that I would apply, he gave me the papers which I did not open until I went to the office — Col. Jn°. Armstrong was not very well, and asked me if I would take the trouble to fill some blank warrants, I did so & filled them with the first entries as they stood on the books, and handed them to him to sign, he told me that those lands were transfered to J. G. & T. Blount that the transfers were in the hands of Major Doherty, and that I had best put in their names, I put my pen through the first names, and did as he requested, he then signed them and I paid him his fees — these warrants were not obtained on affidavit — I think the number of warrants obtained was between 17 & 21 —

Stockley Donelson has lately told me that the original warrants were put into the hands of his father to locate, and that his father was killed by the Indians and probably had the warrants with him — that the lands had been surveyed by John Donelson — I never saw the originals, nor did I ever hear that they had passed into grants until lately — and I now only know it from report I am,

Your O^{bt}. Servant
Willie Blount

J.G. & T. Blount Esquires
Addressed: J. G. & T. Blount Esquires
Raleigh
North Carolina

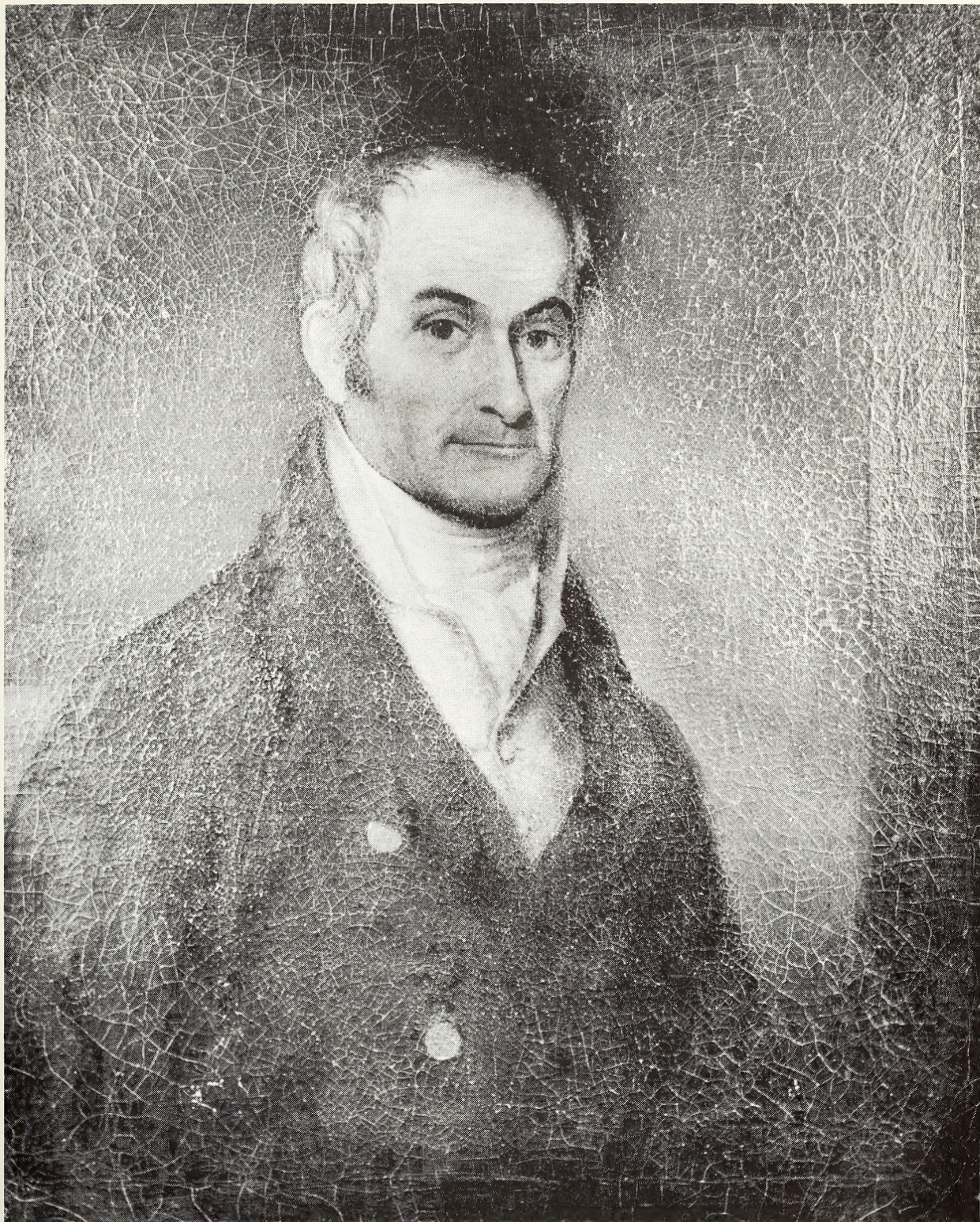
Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarborough 5th June 1800

Dear Sir,

M^r Solomon Sessums has tasted the Porter you sold to M^r Parker & likes it so well that he has requested me to inform you that he will take a Cask of it, if you will be pleased to send it by the first Boat, & pay the Cash unless it will suit you as well to take payment in the hands of Governor Wallace⁹³ against whom

⁹³ John Wallace of Shell Castle was referred to as "Governor." Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 97, n.152.



Willie Blount, older of the two surviving sons of Jacob Blount by his second wife, Hanna Salter Baker Blount; half-brother to William, John Gray, and Thomas Blount. Photograph from the files of the State Department of Archives and History.

he has a Judgment for 80, or £90—

My neighbor & friend John Lackey requests the favour of you to keep a look out for his negroe man Adam who ran away the day before yesterday & is supposed to have gone to Washington with intention to get on board of some Vessel bound to Phil^a. or some other Northern Port. Adam is well acquainted at Washington, having been often there last winter in one of the Boats owned at this place, & M^r Lackey supposes he may be known to you—M^r Lackey wishes if he can be apprehended to have him confined in goal—He will pay all necessary Expences—with Comp^{ts}. to all—I remain

Yours as usual
Tho. Blount

Addressed: M^r John Gray Blount
Washington

fav^d. by }
M^r M^cKean }

William and James Moss to John Gray Blount

Nassau June 13th 1800

John Gray Blount Esq
Dear Sir

Your esteemed favours of the 14 April via Charleston and 16th May P[er] the True Blue⁹⁴ who arrived here this day we have received[,] with the different Papers therein mentioned[,] for which and for your attention to our Business return you our best thanks

We were unacquainted with the revenue Laws of the United States[,] the Porter was shipped as we received this from Liverpool and the 16 doz bottles Porter was put on board more for Stores than sale but on that we did not wish even to evade the Duty as on any other Articles and flatter ourselves both vessel and property now under Seizure will be dismissed by the Secretary of the Treasury[,] we are particularly obliged to you for the friendly manner in which you have engaged in this Transaction and you may rely that any Security you have entered into respecting the same shall be most faithfully discharged by us

⁹⁴ See John Sitgreaves to Blount, April 29, 1800, in this volume.

We leave the disposal of the remaining part of the True Blue's Cargoe to yourself being convinced you will doe the best for our Interest and will thank you to let us know when the Sales are closed—

We are now fitting out a Polacre rigged Ship⁹⁵ well calculated for your Basin [2] its probable we may send her to your address with a Cargoe of Exuma Salt⁹⁶ and wish to know the period it should arrive and the price that may be expected [,] Duties and all Charges deducted[.] Cap^t Johnson is well and we thank you for your attention to him[.] hoping to have the Pleasure of hearing from you via Charleston or direct here when convenient

We remain

Dear Sir

respectfully

Your Most Obedient Sev^t.

W^m. & James Moss

P. S.

Cap^t Love resides in the country

Your Letter for him Shall be forwarded tomorrow
he is very well —

Lumber —	35 D ^{rs} . p ^m .
Shingles	6"
Corn —	8/—
Pork —	16 ^{dr} .
Tar & Pitch	3 ^{dr}
Herrings —	4 ^{dr} .

Stock in Demand

(Duplicate)

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Merchant
Washington
North Carolina

New York July 15th 1800 rec^d & forwarded P thy respectful
Friend

W^m Kenyon

⁹⁵ A ship of two or three masts with square or lanteen sails.

⁹⁶ Salt from Exuma Island or the Exuma Cays in the Bahamas, north of Cuba.

*John Wallace to John Gray Blount*Jn^o G Blount Esq^r. .Shell Castle June 14th. . 1800D^r Sir.

Your letter the 29th. . May came to hand by Cap^t. . How[.] Cap^t. . Fletcher has not returned this way I suppose came in at New Inlet and gone to long Shoal, I now Send the Flounder up to load with Shingles, for the Northward, which business I wish to keep her in this Summer as also the Caleb is now ready to go into the same business, if you have a load there for the Flounder & Caleb send down by Express Immediately to me And the Caleb Shall go up, if she is to go to long Shoal Write me, and Send an order for the Shingles, and she Shall Immediately go there[.] I hope by the time they are both loaded you will be here with me, that we may plan what Market to send them to for to obtain a Load of Stone for them Back, which will be a grand Object for us both.

I have now Our Work at the East End of the Castle almost logged up, & am going to Morrow for my other logs to finish that and log up as Much more at the Other End of the Castle, all which logs I have now down at the water, which work I expect to have Compleated In the course of Six weeks If the weather permits, which Just Makes the Castle One hundred yards In length.

I have a great many Men Employed, which takes all the Money I can git hold of for their [2] provision & pay their wages—I have bad Luck in gitting money from all quarters. the Caleb fell greatly short (by gitting her cargo damaged) of gitting as much Money as I expected; I have promised Jo. Collins That on her return I would pay him a thousand Dollars — cannot pay him More than five hundred, which I must do, or be worse than my word, which I dont wish to be with him, or should have sent you more up by Rumbly.

Do have the Vessels Loaded as quick as possible: There comes up in the Flounder One Ton of Lignum Vitea⁹⁷ which came in the Caleb for Elias Hoel—which you charge him the freight of from providence⁹⁸ to Washington, I think not less than \$20. which you will pass to the Credit of the Castle.

⁹⁷ *Lignum vitae*. A timber from the West Indies and South America which is both hard and self-lubricating, and therefore was used for such items as mal'ets and pulleys. C. R. Metcalfe and L. Chalk, *Anatomy of the Dicotyledons* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 2 volumes, 1950), I, 291.

⁹⁸ New Providence. One of the Bahama Islands, on which Nassau is located.

You will please to send me down by Capt. How on his deck Load of Shingles twelve hundred feet of a good quality of One Inch and half board, if you can git them if not twelve hundred of one Inch of a good quality, which you place to the Debit of the Castle and Send me down a bill of the Costs.

I am obliged to go after the logs and attend to them myself which keeps me great part of my time from home, but I hope by the End of Next week to get them all here, when I expect to continue at home and carry on the work with as Much dispatch as possible. Tom Blount has been very sick but is now on the[?] recovery all the rest of the family On the Castle are all Well as the rest of our friends at this place [3] With Compliments to Mrs. Blount & family

& remain

D^r Sir.

Your Most Obed^t

Hbl^e Serv^t.

John Wallace

Addressed: John G Blount Esq^r

Merchant

Washington

Cap^t Tho^s How —

John Wallace to John Gray Blount

Shell Castle June 30th 1800

D^r Sir.

Yours by Cap^t How came safe to hand, the Caleb I had Sold before, it came to hand for \$1150.⁰⁰ to be paid at Perquimons in Corn and white Oak Hogshead Staves & heading Say corn at \$2 per Bll Staves & heading at \$16 p^r m.

The Beaver is now gone after the pay for the Caleb.

I am half done Logging up the Castle, and at work on the other half, but have not trees Enough to finish; I have them Cut in the Woods but Cannot git wheels Stout Enough to Draw them Down, do if you have not Sent a pair before [2] this comes to hand do it, or write me and I must Send for a pair some Where Else. I [am] the Busiest that I ever was in my life, 40 to 45 in family.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ I.e., family and employees.

[Captain] How Sails for Long Shoal that Moment the wind will Let. we are all well at the Castle with respects to you and family. No News here if you have any do write. — While I remain D^r Sir.

Yours &C—
John Wallace

Addressed: Jn^o G Blount Esq^r
Merch^t.
Washington

Capt Brett

Thomas Blount to [John Gray Blount with enclosure]

Tarborough 1 July 1800

Dear Sir,

It is feared by some of the friends of M^r Jefferson, & particularly M^r [Blake] Baker whose zeal increases daily, that the personal popularity of E. Hall¹⁰⁰ is not great enough to afford them a fair opportunity of exerting their strength and as M^r Hall is perfectly willing to resign his pretensions & give his interest to any Gentleman who may be considered by the Republicans as standing a better chance than himself to be elected,¹⁰¹ having declared himself a candidate merly for the good of the cause to meet the Declaration of Col. Mayo;¹⁰² it has been insisted on by M^r. Baker that I should consult you & through you some other Gentleman of your place, whether it would not be more advisable to start Reading Blount or William Kennedy.¹⁰³ M^r Baker thinks that the latter might to be the Man & has therefore written a Letter to him on the subject to be presented by you if it should meet your approbation or otherwise to be with-held — you will find it enclosed — He is quite as willing that Reading should be the Candidate provided he is himself willing & it should be thought that [2] he can command as many votes as M^r K — in the Count-

¹⁰⁰ Edward Hall was a merchant of Tarboro. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 161.

¹⁰¹ As a presidential elector pledged to Jefferson.

¹⁰² Colonel Nathan Mayo lived 18 miles west of Williamston. He represented Martin County 1786 to 1792, and Edgecombe County 1796 and 1797 in the North Carolina Senate. A friend of Samuel Johnston, he had by 1800 become pro-Federalist. McRee, *Iredell*, II, 521; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 146, 252.

¹⁰³ A Pitt County lawyer who was elected to the United States House of Representatives of the Eighth, 1803-1805, and the Eleventh, 1809-1811, Congresses and succeeded Thomas Blount there in 1812. As shown by this letter, he was a Republican, but ran against Thomas Blount yearly from 1803 to 1810 with some Federalist support. Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, 96, 241-242. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1156.

ies of Pitt, Beaufort & Hyde — but he wrote to Mr K in consequence of my saying that I thought Reading had no inclination to offer — Now you must know that Holland Johnston¹⁰⁴ has told me that he would either support Mr Hall or, in case of his declining, become a Candidate himself — and in all your consultations upon the subject you must keep that man & his declaration in view; for it is of much importance to us to fix on a Candidate who has a good share of popularity in Pitt, or an influential friend there who will support him with proper zeal. it is at present believed that no person in that County will be so active as Doct. Williams¹⁰⁵ who you know is on the other side of the question — We wish to know your opinion of this matter as soon as possible, & if possible before the 13th. Inst. as on that day Mr Baker will start for Newbern where he means to exert himself to aid the Candidate fixed on — for my part I shall support Kennedy, Hall, Johnston or Reading with equal zeal, & I wish you with the advice of your most confidential friends to name to us the one who will in your opinion stand the best chance; but it is here thought that he ought not to address the district yet [3] awhile — and that when he does make an address it should be published in hand Bills & not in the newspaper. It is true that Mr Hall is not a very popular man, but I believe he would in this County hold a poll nearly or quite equal to Mayo's, & that Mr Baker's objection to his being the Candidate does not rest altogether on his want of popularity — I think he has some personal dislike to him. He can be depended on — can Mr K? be sure that you do not suffer yourself to be deceived in that point & your choice will perfectly satisfy me. for if we can but get a proper vote I care not a straw who gives it — but it is time that the person who is to give it was fixed on & declared by his friends in all the counties, as delay may give some advantage to his opponent & in the mean time Mr H. & Mr Johnston are both kept in suspense which may also prove injurious to the cause.

I this day rec^d. Letters by Mr Irwin from our Sister Harvey & among them one for you & another for Reading which I send herewith — Willie did not write to me but Mr Irwin left him at Knoxville on the 19th. Inst. & I hope that Mr Tatom will find him there & that we shall see him at New Bern in July —

¹⁰⁴ A representative in the House of Commons from Pitt County, 1795-1799. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 347.

¹⁰⁵ Possibly Robert Williams, who represented Pitt County in the North Carolina Senate, 1793-1796, 1802-1806, and also 1808, 1813, 1814 and 1820. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 347. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 393, n.2, 394; II, 733. The Journals of the Senate do not show Williams as a member in 1807, as Wheeler maintains.

I wish you to get for me half a dozen blank Subpoena's from the Clerk of New Bern Sup. Court in the suit The State vs Tho. Blount¹⁰⁶ [4] I say blank because I have not yet determined who I will summon — at present I think of summoning William Orr, Ed. Hall, John G L Schenck, John Hudson Richard Blackledge & Nat. Macon but possibly I may thereafter find that some of them cannot conveniently attend & in that case I must take some others of my neighbours who can equally well prove my general Character & that I have paid no sort of attention to any kind of business carried on under the firm of JG & TB. These Subpoena's you will know I ought to receive as soon as possible —

Remember you are at liberty to present Mr B's letter to Kennedy when you please or to withhold it from him altogether if you please; but if you should discover that he wishes to be the Candidate, & be of opinion that he can be relied on for a proper vote in case he should be elected, I suppose it would be well, as I understand that he & you are now quite friendly, to put him up — for I deem it quite a desirable thing to preserve harmony between him & you. let me know whether Polly will go with Jackey to Blount Hall when we go to Newbern, & if she will, whether they cannot meet on some day to be fixed on by you, at Greenville — Jackey sends love to Polly & the rest of your family — I remain

Yours &c.

Tho. Blount

[enclosure]

Tarborough June 28th. 1800

Dear Sir

The friends of Mr. Jefferson in this quarter have been looking out for a proper Character to set up as a Candidate for Elector in this District[.] Our old friend Col^o. Mayo has deserted us & from his popularity & general good character, we have reason to fear that he will be successfull unless he is opposed by one equally popular & by vigorous exertions[.] It is from a belief that you possess the popularity & that you & your friends as well as the friends of Mr. Jefferson in general will use these exertions, that our choice has fallen on you; for it certainly becomes us, if we have Mr Jefferson's Election at heart, all to unite in the elec-

¹⁰⁶ The suit over land frauds. See Election Circular—Thomas Blount, July 25, 1800, in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

tion of the man whom we think will stand the best chance to succeed[.] I have only then to observe that I hope you will determine to stand forth as the Candidate on our part; that we are not only in serious earnest in making this application to you, but quite anxious that you should favor it & can assure you that our resolution upon the subject has been formed with deliberation & that should you determine to be our Candidate, we will exert ourselves to the utmost in your support & shall be glad to hear from you upon the subject as early as possible[.] Mr. Jefferson has many warm friends in this County, who are determined to be very active & I make this request to you by the consent & approbation of such of them as I have had an opportunity of consulting upon the subject & have'nt the smallest doubt but that they will be unanimous in supporting your Election, in which case with the able assistance which I know you will get in Pitt & Beaufort to say nothing of Hyde & Glasgow, I am quite confident that you can be elected; but upon this part of the business & the plans we ought jointly to pursue, I have much to say hereafter, when your determination shall be known, In the mean time, I remain with anxious expectation of hearing from your daily,

Yours Sincerely
Blake Baker

Addressed: William Kennedy Esquire
Washington

[Endorsed in another hand]

In consequence of this Letter I talked with Mr Kennedy in presence of J^o Allen, Jo^s. Bonner & others[.] he declined offer. & agreed to run Holl^d Johnston.

Thomas D. Ogden to John Gray Blount

Philadelphia July 3^d 1800.

Sir

I took the Liberty of addressing a letter to you a short time before Mr. William Blount's death being informed by Judge Sitgreaves that you were appointed by my Father (Mr. . Titus Ogden)¹⁰⁷ Executor to his Estate but having not received an answer

¹⁰⁷ For Ogden, Sr. see John Sitgreaves to Blount, February 28, 1798, n.33, in this volume.

suppose it miscarried — I therefore take the Liberty to write again requesting you will let me know as soon as convenient the real situation of his affairs. I have reason to expect he has left something considerable being informed by David Allison in the year 1792 that he & my Father were in copartnership and had made a considerable sum of money which must have been left clear when he died as the property he possessed when he lived in Newbern must I think [2] have been sufficient to answer his debts at his death independent of what he made in Knoxville[.] this and other information I have received is the Foundation on which I have founded my opinion of his having left a considerable property.

I will thank you to give me a Statement of his circumstances as soon as possible.

I am Sir very respectfully
your's
Tho^s. . D. Ogden

Addressed: Mr John G. Blount
Washington
North Carolina

Blake Baker to John Gray Blount

Tarborough July 6th 1800

Sir

Jim Johnston¹⁰⁸ has run away as I suppose—& I have put the Bearer in pursuit of him[.] You will much oblige me by rendering him every assistance in your power towards apprehending him as I have reason to believe that he will make for Washington as you will see by my advertisement which Mr Davidson has[,]
which you will be good enough to direct him at what places [2] to set them up & let your young man copy some of them for him if he should not have enough[,]
as I send him off in a hurry[.] We are quite anxious to hear from you on the subject of Elector & Shall be glad to do so by return of Mr. Davidson

yours respectfully
Blake Baker

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Washington

¹⁰⁸ Probably an apprentice, as slaves commonly had no surname.

*Thomas Harvey Blount to John Gray Blount*July 6th 1800

Honord papa,

I expected to have rec^d a letter from you by Mr. Jordan,¹⁰⁹ but he has since told me he was not certain that he would come up here, therefore my expectations vanished — The School begins Tomorrow, (we had only a week for vacation) & the examination is past [,] much to my liking — I shall this Session begin & study Cicero, & Paley's Philosophy[.]¹¹⁰ John will study I suppose the things you want him to study & he has to pay 5\$ more for the studying of French — Mr. Jordan starts early in the morning or I should have written more — My Love [2] to the family I remain your ever

Dutiful Son
Tho^s H Blount

P. S. My Love to
Uncle's Tom's & Reading's
families —

THBlount

Addressed: Mr. John G Blount
Washington

Attention
Mr. Jordan —

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarb°. 6th July 1800

Dear Sir,

Mr Baker was from home when I rec^d. your Letters by the last mail and as I could not consult him, I did not forward those for Raleigh & the University — He ret^d. on friday night & says he will admit the probate of the Bond & shall try first upon the Bill last found, but cannot say that he shall not afterwards try on the others¹¹¹ — his testimony is the presumption arising from the

¹⁰⁹ Father of George West Jordan, a student of the University. See Thomas Harvey Blount to John Gray Blount, July 12, 1800, in this volume.

¹¹⁰ William Paley, *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (Philadelphia: Thomas Dobson, [Seventh Edition], 1788).

¹¹¹ The Blounts were being prosecuted for the State in the land fraud trials by their personal and political friend, the State Attorney General, Blake Baker. See Thomas to John Gray Blount, May 5, 1800, in this volume.

Papers you have seen — if he has any other, he will not mention it, & from his manner of speaking I infer that he has no other. The Letter to Taylor I shall not send—the others will go tomorrow by Gen^l. [Lemuel] Sessoms [Sessums] who is here & will then start for the University. Collect all the Testimony you can for I apprehend [2] your trial will be strongly insisted on whether your witnesses from Tennessee appear or not — if Blank Subpoena's cannot be obtained for me, get them filled up with the names I mentioned — by Mr [John?] Davidson, the Bearer, I wish you to answer my political Letter by the last mail if you have not already done so, as we are all anxious to know with certainty who is to be our Republican Candidate[.] Jackey has not determined whether she will come to Washington or go to Blount Hall¹¹² when I go to Newbern—she is well & send Love to Polly & the family

Yours &c. in haste
Tho. Blount

Addressed: Mr John G Blount
Washington

fav^d. by
Mr Davidson

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarb^o. 8th July 1800

Dear Sir,

Your Letters to Casso & White started from here this morning in the care of Lemuel Sessums who has promised to deliver them with his own hand & inform me of the delivery by Letter — the Letter to Taylor I did not send because Baker has explicitly said that he will admit the probate of the Bond made in the Court of Oyer—of these things I wrote you on Sunday last by Jn^o. Davidson & to that Letter I must refer you for what Baker has said of his intention in respect to our trial — he has said nothing on the subject since — We have here a Report that Thomas Jefferson is dead & I fear it is too true — however the Mail has not yet arrived & there is yet some hope that it is not. If it should be

¹¹² The home built about 1753 by Jacob Blount, Sr., 16 miles southwest of Greenville. Sharpe Blount lived there in 1800. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, xvii, xxix; Masterson, *William Blount*, 4, 6. The house has only recently (1963) been destroyed by fire.

true, I presume the Republicans will run for President Aaron Burr of New York, who was to have been run with Jefferson for Vice President, or James Madion — either of them is equal to, & highly worthy of, the important Trust; & I hope the Candidate fixed on by the Republicans in the Northern States will be supported with zeal by Men of that description in all the States. We are [2] impatient to receive your answers to my Letter by the last Mail — pray keep us not in suspense — With Com^{ts}. from Jackey & myself to all

I remain

Y^{rs}. &^c

Tho. Blount

The Richmond Paper of the 1 July is rec^d. here by me & contains no Acco^t. of Mr. Jefferson's death I therefore conclude that the Report is not true but a mere electioneering Trick —

T.B

Free

Addressed: Mr John Gray Blount
Washington
Mail

*Edward Forbes¹¹³ to John Gray
and Thomas Blount [with enclosure]
[Copy]*

Dublin 10th. July 1800

Mess^{rs}. J. G and T. Blount
Gent

Not having the pleasure of receiving any of your favors for a long time, I take this opportunity of handing you the prices current for your products at this market[.] I hope some of them will be found worth your attention This country which for two or three years past has been in a very disturbed state is now in Peace & quiet & free from Rebellion & from the measure of a Legislative Union with g^t. Britain which is expected to take

¹¹³ An Irish merchant with whom the Blounts had long traded. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 108-112 and *passim*.

place from the 1^t. January next,¹¹⁴ hope will long continue so

Flaxseed[?]* Sales commenced at £5 — pHhd & ended at £3 5/ — its reduction was owing to a great quantity of seed that remained of the preceeding years importation, but as all is now nearly sold & the ———* Mills buying up what remains for Crushing at 2½ Guineas & £3 pHhd. am in expectation it will prove a better trade next season & an object of fair speculation —

Tobacco. very little prime James' River wrapping at Markets, price is maintained at 5^d. to 7½^d pbl, of Midling & inferior kinds there is a good supply, price 3^d. @ 5^d. pble. The Duty is paid by the Consumer, should you ship any to this market let it be of best quality which will command & readier sale & leave you better profit — [2] It will give me sincere pleasure at all times to serve you, I remain with great respect.

Gent

Your most hu^e Serv^t

Dublin 14^t November 1800

Gent

With the foregoing copy of my respects of the 10^t. July last, I beg leave to hand you Prices Current of your Products at this market —

Our Linens have lowerd considerable & are now cheaper than they have been for some years —

I am Gents

Your most hu^e Serv^t

Edw^d. Forbes

[enclosure]

Exc. on London 9¼ p C^{ts}.

1^t. Pot Ash 52/. @ 54/. pC^{ts}. looking up

" Pearl D^o same— dull Sale.

Oak Timber £9—p Ton

Pine D^o £5. @ £5-5/. pr Ton

Maple, Beech, Birch & Ash Timber £8—@ £8-/-5/—p
Ton

¹¹⁴ The Act of Union took effect on January 1, 1801. It created the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and provided, among other things, for one Parliament for the two countries. Goldwin Smith, *A History of England* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, [2nd Edition], 1957), 531-532; William L. Langer (ed.), *An Encyclopedia of World History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948), 437.

* Manuscript damaged and rendered illegible by water.

Deer Skins, very dull sale except for the large heavy sort,
which sell for 6/—@ 8/8 p Skin—Duty 2 1/6^d. p Skin

Addressed: Mess^{rs}. J. G. & T. Blount
Washington
N. Carolina

P. Jacob

—————* Charleston[?]

Stephen Blount to [John Gray Blount]

Savannah, 11th, July 1800

I wrote you some time past by Captⁿ Camron inclosing, as I conceive, the necessary proofs &C. to establish the right I Set up to the negroe fellow Cupid which you politely informed me, was in your possession as belonging to the estate of Doct^r William M^c.Kenzie deceased, not Having Had the pleasure of Hearing from you since induces me to suppose that a miscarriage in the conveyance Have taken place or some other casualty intervened Having no doubt from your former kindness in the promises of your attention to the business on recpt. of my letter &C—in the mean time Should the same Have come to Hand, Will esteem it a singular fav^r. My good sir if you will attend to its contents So far as are consistant With your safety agreeable to the laws of your State. Should the proofs &C. not be Suficient to warrant your complying with my request, will thank you to inform me by post wherein the deficiency consists as I may be able to remedy the same & forward it to you in that way, which will justify your said compliance—

In the mean time believe me with wishes for Your Health & prosperity—Your most. obed^t. humb^e. serv^t.

Stephen Blount

* Manuscript damaged and illegible.

Elijah Bell to John Gray Blount

[July 11, 1800]

Mr. . John Gray Blunt Sir

Agreeable to your Request I have rote you In respect of my being Sheriff and likewise informing you that the Tax In this County¹¹⁶ was 7/6 on the Pole for which 100 Acres of Land paid 2/6 which I Expected to have Heard from you and Mr. . Blackledge Before this[.] Which If Convenient wold be much Oblige to you and Mr. . Blacklede to Send on the amount of your Taxes for your Lands and Like wise Inform you to pay Sum attention to the Law that was past Last Session Page 41 Section 6 as this is the time of Giving in for the year 1800[,] Which Said Law Gives no Indulgence Only from the Controler and an answer from will much Oblige

your Humble St
Elijah Bell Sff

July 11th 1800

Addressed: John Gray [Blount]
Merchant
Washington

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarb°. 11th July 1800

Dear Sir,

We all agree to run Johnston¹¹⁷ & Mr Baker will to-morrow call on him in his way to your place & tell him that he has been fixed on as the Candidate &c. &c. and he will also write to Col. Gorham¹¹⁸ on the subject—so I consider that matter settled—you say you will start for New bern on the 17th. &, as Jackey has in consequence of the extreme heat of the weather declined her talked of visit to Blount Hall, I have determined to be at your House on the 10th to accompany you — My plan is to go to Reading's on the 15th — before which time I hope you will contrive to send me the

¹¹⁶ Sheriff Bell's County has not been identified.

¹¹⁷ Holland Johnston. See Blake Baker to William Kennedy, June 28, 1800, in this volume.

¹¹⁸ Possibly James Gorham (c. 1743-1805), a Jeffersonian active in the politics of Pitt

Subpena's—if you do not, I shall be in a bad box—I understand that there is at Hanrahan's an honest Irish man, a good Cooper, who wants employment; & if he answers the description, I should be glad to employ him on terms highly advantageous to him—his name is Delany. If good Rum can be had low with you, I must buy a Barrell or two—I shall have occasion for at least one at the Election — & want [2] near or quite one for Bounce — Jackey cannot come down with me for the reason that she declines going to Sharpe's & because hot & dry weather increases the danger of yellow fever which I apprehend we shall meet at New Bern. provide all the Cash you can for that Journey for I have none—We send you Love, Comp^{ts}. &c. &c.

Yours as usual
Tho. Blount

Addressed: Mr. John Gray Blount
Washington

fav^d. by }
B. Baker, Esq^r }

Thomas Harvey Blount to John Gray Blount

Chappell — Hill July 12th 1800

Honored papa,

I promised to write you by this post in a letter which John wrote some Days past to Mama, (but I imagine She has not yet rec^d them as it was sent by Mr. Baker)—I do not know of any thing I have to write you about that would give you any satisfaction, however you have often told me to write if it was only to tell you that we were well, & this letter is just to satisfy you in this particular—The examination being over we had 8 days vacation & we have now began school again & I wrote you what I was studying & as to Latin I think I know as much about it as any in my class though they have studyed it 12 Months longer than I have, but if you think I praise myself, I hope the fall examination will convince you of the truth of the assertion—I wish you could determine [if]* I am to come back next year, because I shou[ld be]* very [glad] to be satisfied in that parti-

* Hole in manuscript.

cular as I might arrange my studies in such a manner as would be most beneficial to me — also if I do quit this place I want to know in time that I may sell my Mattress to Mr. Jordans son¹¹⁹ as he has none & wants mine very much, provided I leave this place —

Since you left this place there has been a new alteration in the University, i.e. in Teachers and Tuition — Mr. Webb,¹²⁰ has quit & Mr. Murphy¹²¹ has taken his place & Mr. Richard Henderson,¹²² a young man about 17 years old has taken Mr. Murphy's place, consequently if they go on so for a year or two more, this place will be in my opinion, tumble to nothing — & you will see my observation just —

I will now give you a statement of the expence of this Session, I gave you one when you were here, but since the Session began it is altered — viz $\frac{3}{2}$

	<u>m</u>	
For Myself. Board	23	For Myself
[Tuition (Arithmetic, Latin) &c—&c—	$7\frac{1}{2}$	\$.38
[W]ashing*	$3\frac{1}{2}$	
[Ro]om* Rent	1	
[Serva]nt* Hire	1	
	<hr/>	
	36"	
For John's Board	23\$	
Tuition		
viz—5 for French & $7\frac{1}{2}$ for	} 12 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Arithmetic & Geography—		
Washing	$3\frac{1}{2}$	
Room Rent	1	
Servant Hire	1	
	<hr/>	
	41 for John added	
	36 to mine makes=	
	<hr/>	
	77	

¹¹⁹ Probably George West Jordan. Connor, *Documentary History*, II, 499.

¹²⁰ William E. Webb, Professor of Ancient Languages at the University, 1799-1800. Webb was later in the House of Commons from Halifax and was a trustee of the University. Battle, *History of the University*, I, 162.

¹²¹ Archibald D. Murphey (or Murphy), A.B., 1799, succeeded Webb as Professor of Ancient Languages, 1800-1801. Connor, *Documentary History*, II, 190, n.36; for a sketch of Murphey see *Dictionary of American Biography*, XIII, 345-346.

¹²² Henderson was a tutor, 1800-1804. Battle, *History of the University*, I, 166.

* Hole in manuscript.

My Compliments to the family & write me back as soon as possible & remain your ever dutiful Son

Addressed: Mr. John Gray Blount Sen^r
Washington
North Carolina

William Charles Lake to John Gray and Thomas Blount

Liverpool July 14th. 1800

Dr Sirs

I beg leave to add the present prices Current with a continuance of assurances of the real pleasure a continuation of your correspondence will afford.

Your most obed Serv
W^m. Cha: Lake

[Here followed Lake's Letter of January 25, 1800]
[enclosure]

PRICES CURRENT
 OF
 AMERICAN PRODUCE.

Liverpool

TOBACCO.

James River,	3 ^d . to 7 ^d .	
Rappahannock,	} 2 ¾ to 5 ^d .	
Potowmack,		
Georgia,		
Carolina,		
Stem'd,	4 ^d .	9 ^d .
Maryland, Brown,	3.	31¼
Coloury,	31½	4 ^d .
Kitefoot,	5 .	8
[IND]IGO,* Carolina,	2/6	4/6
DEER [S]KINS,*	20.	22 ^d .
PITCH,	10/	12/—
TURPENTINE,	15/—	16/—
ROSIN,	12/	12/6
BEES WAX,	£9	
ASHES, Pearl, 1st	50/—	
Pot, 1st	52/—	
RICE,	36/	
TAR,	24/—	26/—
HORNS, Ox and Cow,	30/—	60/—
Tips,	12/—	13/6
FLAXSEED, for crushing,	6/6	7/—
for sowing,		
PIG IRON,	£7.	£7. 10 —
STAVES, White Oak Pipe,	£22.	£25.
Hhd.	18.	20. —
Brl.	12.	15. —
Red Oak Hhd	£8.	£9.
Brl.	£5	£6. —

* Hole in manuscript.

Addressed: John Gray & Tho: Blount Esq^r.
Washington
North Carolina.

P the Lydia]

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarborough 15th July 1800

Dear Sir,

I informed you in my Letter of Saturday last by M^r Baker that I would start this day for New Bern & arrive at your House Tomorrow — but finding it extremely inconvenient to leave home to-day, & the weather being too hot to travel 15 Miles unnecessarily, I have this morning determined to decline starting until Tomorrow Morning & to take the shortest & most direct road. My plan now is to sleep Tomorrow Night at Blount Hall or Col. [John?] Allen's & Meet you the next day at West's ferry¹²³ where I suppose you will rest an hour or two & Dine — let it then be agreed between us that he who arrives first shall order Dinner & wait the arrival of the other until 5 o'Clock if necessary — I shall not for my own part fail to be there by 2. I am the more anxious to meet you there because I wish to be with you in Town & know not what house you intend to put up at — if therefore it should happen that I cannot meet you, please leave a line for me there informing me where I shall find you — take William Orr on with you or tell him not to fail in his attendance on the 7th day of the Term as on the 8th I hope to get my trial, that being State Day — I suppose R. Blackledge will be there or I would request you to ask him to attend — I have summoned from here E. Hall, J. Hudson, & J.G.L. Schenck & they will attend. I must repeat my poverty in hopes that you will be able to remedy the evil — I can scarcely raise Cash enough to defray my traveling expences to New Bern. The Report of Jefferson's death is found to be untrue — our friend Col. Spaight, who was here on Saturday Evening, passed his House on the 3^d July & says he was then in

¹²³ A ferry across the Neuse River just above New Bern. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, map opposite 64.

perfect health & had not been sick. Jackey sends Love & Compliments to be offered to your family & Reading's — I am

as usual

Yours &c.

Tho. Blount

Addressed: Mr. John Gray Blount
Washington

[M]ail*

William Shannon to [John Gray Blount]

Philad^a July 17. 1800

D Sir

Yours of 26th June came safe to hand on the 7th instant, acknowledging the receipt of mine directed to Raleigh — I immediately handed the protests to Mr Beckley, and found that he had received your letter of same date as mine — He assured me he would write you on the subject soon — Herewith you will receive the list &c. against David Allison¹²⁴ (at last) but not to my satisfaction, I could not by any means prevail on the Sherriff to sign it, nor would he assign any reason for not doing it, after keeping me in suspense above three weeks after it was made out — It is now signed by a gentleman who keeps the Docquet (entirely) in the Sherriffs Office, and is the same that made it out — I have no doubt of its being pretty correct as much so as if the Sherriff had signed it: but whether it will answer your purpose is what I fear. — I am not conscious of having neglected it one day since your request, paid the Clerk and paid an Att^y and still the Chucklehead Sheriff frustrated all — I shall ere long forward some money to pay the taxes on the Swamp will you be good enough to have an eye to them untill it arrives? and if not too much trouble drop me a line and let me know the amount — I believe Doctor is not doing much, and I think in his line cannot in these times — I think he is nearly recovered from his embarrassments, and when lands will sell again [2]

* Manuscript torn.

¹²⁴ The Blounts were suing the estate of David Allison. See John Gray to Willie Blount, May 11, 1800, in this volume.

I have no doubt he will rise — He has lately lost his Wife. — Shingles are now a pretty price 27 doll to 30 pm dressed, & few good in the Market — My anxiety to do something with the Swam[p]* rather increases: but my Friends, & situation —* ther respects makes it difficult to realize my wishes — Should business be dull here this fall, ———* possible you may see me at Washington for the purpose of opening a Shingle &c campaign — If ———* do not this year it is probable I shall next & mean to expend one thousand dollars by way of tryal, and then quit in case it will not ———*

I have mentioned to you a few times on ———*sue to know what you thought of endeavoring ———* find in the Pecosen a piece of high ground, to le[ase]* for the purpose of errecting Huts for men & Cattle ———* also of raising their provisions — this if practiced ———* greatly lessen the expences both of making and [par]ticularly* of transporting the Shingles, and ———* appreciate (if possible) the lands adjoining ———* first leisure hour you have please employ ———* writing me a Letter — I am always happy to ———* from you, and ready to attend any request y[ou] * can make — I am D Sir

Your Obd Serv^t
Wm Shan[non]*

Isaac Levi¹²⁵ to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

St Pierre Marteq^e. [Martinique] 21 July 1800

Sir . .

Having established myself on this Island as Broker and Commission business, any tranactions you may have in this line at Martinico, and which you may find necessary to intrust to my Care, shall always be attended to with every endeavor of mine to render satisfaction and to promote your interest. dispatch of business and punctual payments has hetherto been my guide and Chief object from these Circumstance alone, I have gained public favour, and am now enabled to extend my Correspondence, and hope to deserve their Esteem and Confidence.

Our Markets here are very fluctuating there is Either a Very

* Manuscript obscured by repair.

¹²⁵ This merchant spelled his name Levy and Levi. See Isaac Levy to Blount, February 16, 1800, in this volume.

great scarcity or a glut so that a stranger or any one Who does not constantly reside in this place may be very Easy deceived, I have however enclosed you an accurate statement of our present prices Current by Which you may Know how and What to Ship

I am S Your Most Obed^t Serv
Isaac Levi
Broker

Addressed: John G. Blunt
merchant
Washington N C—

[enclosure]

St. PIERRE'S PRICES CURRENT,*

July 21st 1800

To be had of ISAAC LEVI, BROKER, on the Bay.

D. C. D.			D. C. D.		
COD FISH	5		Pork,	18	
Mackrel	6		Beef,	16	
Herrings	6		Apples,	8	
Salmon, in Tiercca,	14		Almonds,	12	
do. in barrels	10		Bitter do.	12	
Corn,	4		Figs, in Basket	3	
Corn Meal.	5		Raisins, in jar	6	
Rice,	6		Currants, in Oil	6	
Rice Flour,	6		Potatoes,	3	
Flour,	12	50	Cypress Shingles,	10	
Superfine do.	13	50	White Pine, per m.	4	
Black eyed Pease,	8		Pitch Pine Lumber	42	
White Beans,	6		White Pine, do.	32	
Biscuit,	6		Staves,	20	
Ship Bread,	5		Hoops,	40	
Sugar,	6		Tar,	3	
Coffee,	18		Turpentine,	3	
Cocoa,	12		Pitch,	3	
Rum,		50 ^p	gal. Whale Oil,		50 pg ⁿ
Brandy,	1	50	Madeira, do.	200	
Gin, in Case	10		Molasses		30 pg ^l
White Wine,	60		Sweet do. in balls	10	
Port, do. in fav ^d doz	6		Hog's Lard,		30 pr
Claret, in Calk	60				pound

* A printed handbill.

Thomas Blount to John Haywood

Tarb°. 31 July 1800

Dear Sir,¹²⁶

I send you my address to Election district N°. 9.¹²⁷ I will thank you to show it to my friends & cause it to be published in [Joseph] Gales' paper — I have not time to say more

Your friend
Tho. Blount

Addressed: John Haywood Esq^r
Raleigh

Mail.

*Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount*Tarb°. 7th. August 1800

Dear Sir,

I wrote you on Saturday last by Luke to inform you that M^r Willie Jones had requested me to procure from you by the middle of this month when he intends making me a visit as much feather grass seed as you can spare him—and to request you to send it up by Luke. But Luke has not yet returned, although he was ordered in the most positive terms to return last night, & I am afraid he has taken [to] the Bresh¹²⁸—you will therefore oblige me if you will send up the Grass seed by M^r Brickell's¹²⁹ flat which left here this morning, unless he can bring it in his Chair, which would please me better—M^r Jones is extremely anxious to get it by the 15th Inst. & he is equally anxious to get some of the seed of that valuable Grass that grows at Col. Gorham's which you may recollect was described to him by James Gorham in June last. W[ill]* you ask James if he can & will —————* it for him — & s[end]* it up wi^t——* [2] I have since I saw you suffered much pain from another Gum bile, but hope my suffering is now nearly at an end as I this morning had my tooth drawn — Jackey is quite

¹²⁶ From the Haywood Collection.

¹²⁷ See Election Circular—Thomas Blount, July 25, 1800, in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

¹²⁸ Run away.

¹²⁹ Probably William Brickell of Franklin County, who represented that county in the House of Commons, 1780-1783. Others of his family were also in politics. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 149-150; Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 409.

* Manuscript torn.

well & sends love, Comp^{ts}. &^c Brickell can tell you as much about Election as I can—I think my prospect in the Roanoke Counties as good as it has usually been—D. Clark, of [Williamston,] Martin [County], & many other influential Characters are warm in my Interest[.] I am more afraid of Pitt than any County in the district, if I can be well supported there, I think I shall be elected—I remain

Yours &^c. &^c

Tho. Blount

My friend Mr. Poree, one of
the warmest friends in the world,
accompanies Mr Brickell to your
place — he is also your friend —

can you spare me some Turnip-seed? if you can, please send some by Mr Brickell—

T. B.

Addressed: Mr. John Gray Blount
Washington

fav^d. by
M Brickell }

John S. West¹³⁰ to John Gray Blount

Newbern August 10th. . 1800.

Dear Sir

Yours of yesterday came safe to hand last evening — I am really sorry to tell you that Mr. Spaight's election is inevitably lost, as I have all a long expected, his majority in this County being only 209 votes, in Carteret 140 odd. —

In Jones [County] Stanley has a majority of, about 140, in Lenoir about 40 and still much larger in all the other Counties (I expect) from which we have not heard; the difference must be many hundred votes in favour of Stanly.

As this County could not have saved Mr. Speight, (which has been my uniform opinion, for which reason I discouraged him from offering) I cannot but be wicked to rejoice at the mortification of some of his most zealous friends, who have suffered themselves to be most compleatly duped, by ——* [Henry]

¹³⁰ John Spence West represented Craven County in the House of Commons in 1795 and 1796, and in the State Senator in 1810 and 1811. Wheeler Sketches, II, 123.

* Manuscript torn.

Tillman who has really done more injury than he possible could have done openly, but his denil has deceived him also, [William] Gaston is elected ¹³¹ by the small majority of 21 votes, Geo. Ellis had a majority of 76 for the town, J Gatlin jun^r. & JS. Nelson¹³² are elected for the Commons. — I am glad to hear of your brothers success in your County.

I am, Sir, very respectfully
Your Obedient Servant
John S West

NB — Gaston would have beat H T.
at least 150 votes had it not been
for his great duplicity, in consequence of which Spaight lost at least the same number, altho his friends were repeatedly cautioned.

JG Blount esquire

Addressed: Free
John G. Blount esquire.
Washington

John S. West to John Gray Blount

New bern Aug^t 13th. . 1800

Dear Sir

The bearer (George) is on his way to the Hyde election for the purpose of carrying the hand bills under cover, directed to John Jordan,¹³³ should have enclosed them to you to be forwarded to such of Mr. Spights friends as could be relied on (You are best acquainted with them) but least you should be absent have made choice of John Jordan, hower if you should think it better to direct them to some other person please open them and do so.

¹³¹ William Gaston (1778-1844), a Federalist, was born in New Bern, educated at Princeton, and trained in the law by F. X. Martin. Between 1800 and 1832 he served four terms in the State Senate and seven in the House of Commons. He was a Representative in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth United States Congresses (1813-1817), and a judge of the North Carolina Supreme Court from 1833 to his death in 1844. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 933-934; Wheeler, *Sketches*, 114-118; *Dictionary of American Biography*, VII, 180-181.

¹³² "Ellis . . . Nelson." Ellis represented New Bern in the House of Commons and James Gatling, Jr., and John S. Nelson represented Craven County there. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 122, 123.

¹³³ A member of the House of Commons from Hyde County from 1799 to 1802 and again in 1803, and of the North Carolina Senate in 1805. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 213.

George is not acquainted with the way [;] if it was possible to get one who is, the expence would be chearfully paid by Mr Spaight, who is absent (above) —

If any other person can be got to go, he may take the bearers horse, it is desirable that a state of the Poll should be brought by the bearer — as he is directed to wait for that purpose.

See the letter directed to Mr Jasper (from Mr J. Carney¹³⁴ []) with a hand bill enclosed————

Shou'd there be a majority of federalist in Hyde, perhaps it would be improper that those hand bills should appear, of that you will [2] Determine, and act accordingly

I am

Sir

Your Obt Servant

John S. West

NB. you will please open all the bearers letters and correct them if necessary

JSW.

Addressed: John G. Blount esquire

Washington

by George]

Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount

Edenton August 16th. 1800

Dear Sir

Inclosed I send you Mr [Jonathan] Prices Letter & Plat of Eliza's¹³⁵ Land in Pasquotank, I can give you no more information respecting the business that them papers contain excep Mr Price told me they were willing to leave the whole of the dispute to two surveyers, which Price recommends, if you are authorised to do so,

Rays 5,000 Acres of land at the head of Alligato[r River], which he bought of Shaw is to be sold by Execution some time

¹³⁴ "to Mr. Jasper from Mr. J. Carney." James Jasper, a planter who frequently represented Hyde County in one or the other houses of the General Assembly. John Carney was a Craven County landowner and slaveholder. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 213; Benjamin Atkinson to Blount, March 21, 1796, in this volume; *Second Census: 1800*, Craven County.

¹³⁵ Probably Jacob Blount's step-daughter, for part of whose inheritance the Blounts were in litigation with other claimants. See Jacob to John Gray Blount, May 19, 1800, in this volume; Hill Papers, I, 150.

about the first Sep^r. to satisfy a debt due Field, & M^r Collins is requested to purchase for Field, but he has understood there is a dispute between you and Ray or that your lines interfere some way and wishes to be informed, and if they do he will not have any thing to do with it, you will please inform me

Yesterday I received a letter from Col^o. T[omas] Harvey informing me that Shaw had told him, that Jn^o Wall did not mean to return to this State and meant to remove his Negroes and other property out of the State, I have spoke to M^r Slade¹³⁶ to make out an Attachment, and shall sent it down to the Sheriff I would go down and take one out myself in that County, but Betsey¹³⁷ is too unwell to leave She has been very sick but is to day Clear of Fevour, the Attachment will be returnable to the superior Court, And I believe you will have your Money as soon that way [2] as any if Not sooner than to Attach returnable to that County Court,

Our Elections closed yesterday the latter part of the day, we had some Skirmishing, amongst the rest Col^o. Creecy, & Maj^r. Allen¹³⁸ come to Close quarters, the latter gave the dam lie and rec^d the reward due, a very Bloody Nose and a few kicks, a Challenge was immediately sent, I am told in the following Words by Allen[:] If you have the spirit of a Louse you will meet me with a brace of Pistols in fifteen minutes, the answer was he would do so, but the words have not heard [*sic*], the Magistrates interfered and they was bound to the peace, Col^o. H[arvey] request me not to let it be known that he give me information about Wate, Jackey¹³⁹ informed me that her mother was better and if she continued to mend she would start for home the last of the week so I am at a loss how to direct to her and have enclosed the letter to you to forward if she is not with you, Nancy¹⁴⁰ and my self are well,

With Comp^{ts}. to all I am

Your &c.

Jacob Blount

¹³⁶ William Slade, a lawyer and member of the House of Commons for Edenton in 1800. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 95.

¹³⁷ Possibly another of Jacob's children. His wife was away from home. Jacob to John Gray Blount, August 18, 1800, in this volume; Hill Papers, I, 150.

¹³⁸ "Creecy . . . Allen." Lemuel Creecy (d. May 21, 1818) represented Chowan County in the House of Commons 1786-1790 and 1792, and in the State Senate 1793-1798. Nathaniel Allen (c. 1755-1805) was a Revolutionary soldier who represented Edenton in the House of Commons in 1802. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 95, 96; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, December 9, 1805.

¹³⁹ Mrs. Thomas Blount.

¹⁴⁰ This is believed to be Nancy Harvey, possibly a sister of Augustus Harvey and therefore Jacob Blount's sister-in-law by his second wife. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 71, 129, confuses her with Anne Blount, daughter of William Blount, also called Nancy. Mary Blount to Susannah Harvey, September 26, 1796, n.193, in this volume.

Stone¹⁴¹ Congress no opposition

Binbury¹⁴² Senet

Cabarrus¹⁴³

&

Small¹⁴⁴

} Com[mone]^{rs}.

Free

Addressed: Mr. . John Gray Blount
Washington

Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount

Edenton Aug^t. 18th 1800

Dear Sir

I wrote you by last post that I should take out an Attachment on Watts goods returnable to the Sup^r Court but Betsey is so that I can leave her and have concluded to go down tomorrow and take out returns & title to that County Court which will give you the Mony probably 9 M^o sooner which is an Object these hard times,

Inclosed there is a letter for Sukey which please forward if she is [n]ot with you, which I expect & hope she is

Yours &c.

Jacob Blount

Sent the Letter that was inclosed [in] this back to Edenton
W[ill]. O[rr].

Addressed: Mr John Gray Blount
Washington

Free

¹⁴¹ David Stone (1770-1818). A Princeton graduate, he practiced law, served in the General Assembly and on the Supreme Court as well as in the United States House of Representatives and Senate. He was Governor from 1808 to 1810. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1662.

¹⁴² Richard Benbury served in the House of Commons from Chowan County in 1791 and 1794-1798, and in the North Carolina Senate in 1800. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 96.

¹⁴³ Stephen Cabarrus, a native of France, represented Edenton in the House of Commons from 1784 to 1788 and Chowan County there from 1788 to 1794 and from 1800 to 1806. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 94-96. *Journal of the House of Commons*, [1795], [1799].

¹⁴⁴ Reuben Small sat in the House of Commons for Edenton from 1800 to 1803 and also in 1804. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 95.

Abraham Bradley, Jr.,¹⁴⁵ to John Gray Blount

General Post Office [Philadelphia]
August 22. 1800

Sir

Not having received any offer for carrying the mail between Washington & Hyde c[ourt]. h[ouse]. I have to request you to contract with some person for carrying the mail on the route if it can be done for a sum not exceeding two hundred & twenty dollars a year & the expence of ferriages if any. If you find a proper person to contract for the route I wish you to fill out the contract & bond & when executed return them to this office[,] when a counterpart executed by the postmaster general will be forwarded to the contractor.

If there are ferriages the yearly amount is to be ascertained and added to the above sum, so that a quarterly sum in gross is to be paid for carrying the mail without reference to ferriages in the contract.

If you do not soon hear of a person who will contract for that price you will communicate it to this office.

For your trouble in *making the contract* you will be allowed ten dollars to be charged in your quarterly a/c as a contingent expence.

I am respectfully
your obedient servant
Abraham Bradley jun^r
Assist. Postm Gen^l.

John G. Blount Esq.

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq.
Postmaster
Washington N. C.

Free
Abraham Bradley jun.
Assist Postm — Gen^l.

¹⁴⁵ The Assistant Postmaster General. See Abraham Bradley, Jr. to Blount, [with enclosure], September 28, 1800; and Joseph Habersham to Blount, November 25, 1800, in this volume.

*William Shannon to John Gray Blount*Philad^a Aug^t 29th. 1800

DSir/

Yours of the 18th instant is just arrived, and I am happy to hear that there is any probability of the papers you received by my last¹⁴⁶ answering any good purpose—I thank you for the attention paid to the taxes &C^a Herewith I enclose you eighty dollars for the taxes agreeable to what you suggested would do.—You obingly observe that you think ther is high ground enough on the Swamp to build Hutts for the people & raise provender for the Cattle &C which must be employed in transporting the Shingles to a landing—If this is the case, I cannot help thinking that great advantages must arise both to the Shingle making, and to increasing the value of the land—The Hawling ought to be done with the utmost Oeconomy, and I know of no way better than to have it done by Bullocks. one waggon with two setts of them [2] and one driver might go twice to Washington every good day, and carry about 2m Shingles at a load, with the advantage of being always at home in the morning and ready to start with the day — The Bullocks if well fed, instead of growing worse like Horses would increase in a Value for several years and finally be worth twice their first cost—I conceive the land to be good and it could not be a grievous expence to clear as much ground as would support them and do other things besides—It would also induce people to go on some part of it when they found it productive, and help to remove its dismal name—You know all this is only theory, which has frequently to bend to experience—Whether I shall have the pleasure of seeing you in Washington this fall or not I cannot say — I am eager to make a trial [3] of the project, and fearfull lest I should expend money to no purpose: but at any rate If I am spared a little time with success I will make a beggining—Indulge me with a line whenever you can spare time and excuse this lengthy intrusion on an entire selfish Subject.

I am D Sir
With much esteem
Your Obd^t Servant
W^m Shannon

¹⁴⁶ Papers relating to Allison's lands and suits against his estate. Shannon to Blount, July 17, 1800, n.124, in this volume.



Beaufort County Courthouse, Washington, N. C., built about 1800. Photograph from the files of the State Department of Archives and History.

The inclosed money I have taken out—— W: Orr

Addressed: John G Blount Esquire
Washington
North Carolina

Mail

John Salter to John Gray Blount

Knoxville September 2

Dr Sir I have reced the diffraute lots of Land in this State that belongs of our Estate¹⁴⁷ and have offered them for sale and cannot sell for any parte Cash Excepte 150 Acres I have solde for 21½ Dollars p^r Acre and am to have 20⁶ Dollars of that in Cash and the ballance in Horses[.]the Land will not comande no parte Cash for reason thare is no Cash heare Excepte when a purson has mooved in heare from sum of the Easton States then thare is a chance for to get a parte Cash[.] Mr. . Wiley Blount got wet in a Rane Satterday last and he has the ague and fever Lite[;] the reste of the Fameley is well, Mr Toll¹⁴⁸ and Mrs. . [Anne Blount] Harvey &c. sets oute from heare for Tarborough nexte Wednesday[.] I am with respecte youre Ob^t. . &c
sets oute from heare for Tarborough nexte Wednesday[.] I am with respecte youre Ob^t. . &c

Jⁿ. . Salter

John G. Blount Esq^r

Addressed: John G Blount Esq^r. .
N^o. . Carolina Beaufort County
at the Town of Washington

Missent to Raleigh
28 Octob & forwarded

¹⁴⁷ John Salter was an heir of Robert Salter and, like the Blounts, was trying to raise cash from the sale of their land from Richard Henderson's company. See Blount to John Salter, August 8, 1797, in this volume.

¹⁴⁸ Henry Irwin Toole, II, (1779-1816) later married Anne Blount, daughter of William Blount. Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*, I, 36; Ruth Smith Williams and Margarete Glen Griffen, *Bible Records of Early Edgecombe* (Rocky Mount: Dixie Letter Service, 1958), 277.

*Will Orr to John Gray Blount*Washington Sept^r 4th. 1800D^r Sir

I return'd this day from Tyrrell and found the Regulator had Sailed a few hours before my arrival, otherwise Shoul'd have sent the enclosed Letters & papers by her[.] I intended to have sent them by Wilson or Burress, but they both left this without my Seeing of them, Williams¹⁴⁹ was a long time loading the cause of which I suppose he has explained to you. I have been unwell & absent most of the time she was loading therefore could not attend to her: She has on board 2 Casks. Oil Turpentine[.] Tar I could not procure, & martin says about 42-or 3th[ousand] 22 in Shingles[.] 5 or 6 th 18 in [,] & the balance 2 feet——

I have been to Hyde & done the business there agreeable to your Mem^o.[;] the Sale is to be on the 20th Oct^r[.] have also forwarded the Sheriffs Advertisement to be published in Hodges Papers, The Tyrrell business I have not completed, you did not mention to me when you left this any thing respecting the quantity of Land you owned or had to pay the Tax of in Tyrrell you only observed that the Tax would be about £40. that sum I carried with me & on seeing the Shff. he informed me the am^t. of Tax was £80——exclusive of charges for Advertising &c.——finding my funds only half Sufficient to pay [2] the Tax on the whole I paid him the Tax on the 10 th Acres agreeable to the in closed Advertisement, & got him to postpone the Sale of the 50 th until the 20th Inst^t on which day Fitts Land is advertised to be sold & by which time [John] Hall may probably send on Money to save his. I have since my return discovered in looking over Halls acc^t. & Edmund Blounts¹⁵⁰ recpt^t. that Hall only owns 40. th Acres of the 50 th advertised & the other 10 belongs to you [.] Shall therefore go down again and save that, The Tax on Land in that County is 2/8 on the C^t. [hundred] so that the am^t. of the Tax on Halls 40 th is £53-6-8 exclusive of charges &c. I shall have after paying the Tax on the other 10 th a balance in hand say of 13 £ and suppose I could borrow about 40£ which with the above balance will pay the Tax on Halls, but shall not do so; unless you so order, I Shall Set off for Tyrrell on the 18th.

¹⁴⁹ William Williams was a ship captain who had been brought up by the Blounts. He was a protégé of Thomas Blount. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 226; II, *passim*.

¹⁵⁰ Edmund Blount was a wealthy member of the numerous Edenton District Blounts. *Heads of Families* [1790], 33.

You'll see inclosed an Advertisement of James Bonners¹⁵¹—He Bonner also requested me to inform you that he had some Executions agst.—your body. They are on acc^t. of your being Security for Ab[ishai]. Thomas—There was on Monday a Court call'd & the Jurors discharged on Acc^t. of the Lawyers not appearing, they however appeared on Monday evening but nothing was done except providing Deeds &c. and granting Letters of Admⁿ[.] William Ross has Admⁿ. granted him on Simpsons Estate, your Letter [3] left for E. Harris was delivered him by Jo^s. Blount¹⁵² in my absence, the Papers sent will inform you respecting the Elections. the returns from N^o. ampton & Pitt Counties being improperly made out & not complying with the requisites of the Laws, Mr. T. Blount was determined to upset the Election if possable, this information I rec^d. from Ja^s. Bonner, it has, at one time since you left this[,] been very Sickly for a few day's [,] the compliants mostly ague & fever Some few had the Bilious fever, its at this time quite healthy, two children have died, vis Grey Judkins & Mr^s. . Foy's youngest,

I hear little or no compliant from the Plantation & none from the shingle Swamp — Your Letter fr Cap^t. Burrell respecting the Boat Timber Shall be attended to, Compliments to the Family and am with respect

Your Most Obed^t.
Will Orr

P. S. I shall ship by the
first vessel bound for. N. York 9 Casks oil Turpentine——

Addressed: John G Blount Esq^t
Shell Castle

Will Orr to John Gray Blount

Washington Sep^{tr}. 8th 1800

D^r Sir

I have rec^d. your Letter p^r. the Olive Branch Cap^t. J^{no}. Alderson informs me that the ferryage of a man & Horse at Woodstock is 10/ — & William Homer says at Bath it is 2/ Cap^t. Alderson also inform'd me that he was going to send on proposals for carrying

¹⁵¹ Bonner was Sheriff of Beaufort County, 1799-1801. Read, *Beaufort County*, 224.

¹⁵² Another well-to-do member of the Edenton branch of the Blount family. *Heads of Families* [1790], 19.

the mail to & from this place to Germantown,¹⁵³ for Thomas Alderson but did [not] say for what—he would carry it, Alderson has apply'd to me to take 1 or 200 bush^l. Salt for your acct. to which I have agreed, but have made no bargain respecting the price, it will I suppose be delivered in 1 or 2 days — Peter Fullerton has promised to make the Fish Gig — when made shall Send that — & the Rosin down p^r. the Olive Branch provided she will take it down — B Blount has not informed me yet whether I can ship the Spirits & Rosin p^r. the olive Branch or not. —

With respect
Your most Obed^t.
Will Orr.

Addressed: Mr. John G Blount
Shell Castle

John Strother to John Gray Blount

Morgantown Sept^r 8th 1800 —

Sir

Since my last I have received a commission from the Marshal to take the Census in Buncombe, Rutherford, Wilkes & Ashe—I have made arrangements for that purpose, and find it will not be in my way in Other business — but it will put it out of my power to be at Raleigh untill the Middle of Dec^r. if at all — I go to Georgia again in Nov^r. & if them Lands can be sold at all under there present situation (which I am doubtful of) they will not fetch half there Value, and if they are not sued for this fall it is more than probable they will be ultimately lost — The Arrears of Tax due on them will be 2 or 300 Dollars[,] the [2] proprietors under the collector's Titles may propose a compound at half if what I suggested to you in my Letter from Georgia should not take place — write me particular on this subject as soon as convenient — The prospect of geting money in Buncombe is poor[,] indeed the ferry in a fair way of being broke up by a New rout, nothing can be counted from it after this year — I'll send by our member's documents, if attended to that will pay our Enemies

¹⁵³ See William Bradley to Blount, August 22, 1800, in this volume. The route was to be from Washington to Bath, thence across the Pungo River to German or Germantown in Hyde County (also called Hyde Court House). John Alderson to Joseph Habersham, September 28, 1800, in this volume.

for this good turn — let me know who is elected in Craven or who I might address on this Subject. — The result of your trial at New bern gives pain to some in this quarter — others appear gratified at [3] your acquital,¹⁵⁴ among the Latter believe Sir I fill a conspicuous place —

Please write as soon as convenient for I am anctious to hear from you on the subject of my two last Letters, as well on this — Present my compliment to M^{rs} Blount & family to friends & believe me with Sentiments of respect

Y^r Ob^t H^{le} Ser—————*

John Strother

N. B. I have not heard any thing from Knoxville since June last —
Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire

William Blackledge to John Gray Blount

[11 September 1800]

Dear Sir)

I by this post rec^d. from John Jones a letter in which he complains of my not informing him whether you had delivered the small negroes to Sheppard or not, or whether you had determined to keep them & pay Sheppard for him the sum agreed on between you, and says that he had orderd Sheppard to take the negroes into his possession if he has not done so already — Not being able to inform him on this subject you will oblige me very much by leting me know by the first opportunity or post to this place what your determination is, that I may satisfy him — With Compliments to M^{rs}. . Blount

I remain Sir

Your Obd^t Serv^t
W^m. . Blackledge

JG Blount Esquire

} New Bern 11th. . of Sept^r. . 1800

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington

Favord by

Jacob Blount Esq^r. }

¹⁵⁴ On July 15 Blount was acquitted of fraud and on July 25 the State refused to prosecute further cases. Keith, "Three North Carolina Blount Brothers," 303.

* Obscured by seal.

J. B. Borland ¹⁵⁵ to John Gray Blount

Boston Septem 25th 1800

Mr. John G. Blount

Dear Sir

Your favour of the 2^d Ins came to hand on the 18th Inst and agreeable to your request on the 19th Inst I remitted Mess^{rs} Major & Gillispie in a draft at ten days sight Seven hundred dollars to be placed by them to the Credit of M^r Henry Austin of Tarboro' as so much remitted by your order — This is advancing about the whole amount due you as the Tobacco is not yet sold of course I consider you as responsible to me should any of the outstanding debts not be punctually paid. (as I always charge 2% pcent for guaranteeing whenever it is desired by my Correspondents)

M^r Makepeace who advertized respecting the Tide-Mill has not been in town till———* since I received your lette[r]———* principle no[w?]———*

is his plan———* [2] so that when the tide did not answer the water from the reservoir would—This would not be practicable unless the tide was considerable — and the reservoir and pond would require a considerable expence—M^r Makepeace has not yet constructed any Tide-Mill upon his new principle of the certainty of which I think he must doubt as he would sooner have carried his plan into execution

Our Mills generally have the Tub — wheel which is found to do with less Water than any other — it costs from 100 to 150\$ as for size —

Corn is worth from 87 to 90 cents. Tar 3\$ Pitch 3 ¾\$. Turp 3 ½\$. Rozin 3 ½\$ to 3 5/8\$. Staves WO Pipe 52 to 55\$. Hhd 34 to 3\$. Bbl 22 to 25\$. Spirits Turp 55 to 60 cents. Bright Varnish 30 to 35\$

As soon as a Sale of your Tobacco can be effected———* air in the interim I remain———*

—————* Ob^t Serv^t
[J. B. Bor]land*

Addressed: M^r John G Blount
Merchant
Washington
North Carolina

¹⁵⁵ Borland has not been identified.

* Manuscript torn.

Thomas Smith to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

Kingston Jamaica [September] 26th. 1800

Mr. John G. Blount

Sir;

I arrived here on 23^d. after a passage of 25 days; during which passage we experienced a hurricane in Latt^d. 26-20 & Long^d. 70 — we lost all the deck load and one my men washed over board [.] our Cargo was Sold yesterday the boards Plank and Scantling at 60 dollars The Shingles at 10/2 doll^s [;] we have got one fourth of the Cargo already and I hope to Sail from here in 8 or 9 days — all kind of lumber is on the Rise at this place. Cap^t. Robertson has not arrived yet. he came through The turk Island with me and I apprehend he is taken or put into Cape frances.¹⁵⁶ Cap^t. Cox has arr^d. this day, [2] and in the Latt^d. 30, he was taken by a French Privateer and suffered to proceed after puting 15 american prisoners on Board of him, Cox has lost part of his deck load — and also did Cap^t. Roberson — The Schooner two Brothers was in————* over Set Several times during the Huricane, I was nearly being washd over board when Barrow was. I had just left The pump and he Relieved me he not knowing how to hold on poor fellow[.] I spoke with a Ship from philadelphia out 26 days had lost his main & mizzen masts in the Same Huricane[.] they had a light touch of it here our Standing Gibb was washed from the Bows — sprit —

I Remain yours
Thomas Smith

in Closed is a Price Current
dollars is So Scarce here that
we are obliged. to give 3 fr^s.
for them which makes the Voy-
age much worse

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r Free
 Merchant
 Washington, N. C.

¹⁵⁶ Cap Francois. The former name of Cap Haitien, on the northern coast of Haiti. Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 706.

* Illegible.

by Capt
James Sandy
Schooner
Success
Via Newbern
N. C.

[enclosure]

PRICES CURRENT WHOLESALE,
Kingston, Jamaica, 26th Septem.^r 1800

Superfine Flour per Barrel 13. Scale ditto per 100 lbs. 35/.

D^{rs}.

Fine ditto — ditto — 12@12/2	Salmon — Barrel . . 45/ & 50/.
Middlings — ditto — 12 —	Alewives — ditto — 50/—
Ship Bread — ditto — 7.	Herrings — ditto — 50/—
Pilot ditto — ditto — 9	Mackerel — ditto — 55/—
White ditto — ditto —	Lamp Oil, per ditto, of 32 gal- lons—
Corn Meal — ditto. 9 Dols	Spermaceti Candles, per lb. —
Rice — 100 lbs. — 7 —	Pitchpine Boards, per 1000 feet
Corn — bushel — 1 1/4	Ditto Plank per ditto
Pease — ditto 2 —	Ditto Scantling, per ditto
Oats — ditto —	Do. Timber per do. superficial
Mess Beef — Barrel 15	Yellow Pine Boards, per ditto 60 Dols
Cargo ditto—ditto 12—	Common ditto per ditto
Mess Pork — ditto 20 @ 22	Ditto Plank per ditto
Cargo ditto—ditto 18—	Cypress Shingles, 22 inches — 10/2
Butter — lb. 1/8	Ditto 18 ditto —
Bacon — ditto 1/4	Common Shingles — 7 @ 7 1/2
Lard — ditto 1/4	Masts
Tobacco — 100 lbs. 10 D ^{rs}	Spars
Tar — Barrel 7 —	Oak Boards and Plank
Turpentine — ditto 9 —	Hickory Hoops
Pitch — ditto "	White Oak Staves, per M.
Rosin — ditto "	Ditto Heading ditto
Cod-Fish — 100 lbs. 45 —	Red Oak Staves ditto

Sugar, per 100 lbs. 7. $\frac{1}{2}$ @ 10 D ^{rs} .	Pimento, per lb. —
Rum, per gallon, (proof 22) $\frac{4}{3}$ @ $\frac{4}{6}$	Ginger, per 100 lbs. —
Coffee, per 100 lbs. — £7 — @ £7—10	Molasses per gallon $\frac{3}{4}$
Cotton, lb. —	Hides, each, —
	Logwood per ton —
	Fustic per ton —
	Mahogany, per M feet

Exchange on London 15 @ 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ pCt — Advance

ditto on American 5 pCt. at — 7 $\frac{1}{2}$

Dollars 3 pCt. premium —

The Real worth of Dols are 6/8

Abraham Bradley, Jr. to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

General Post Office

Septem^r 28. 1800

Sir

I have just received the inclosed proposal for carrying the mail between Washington & Germanton[.] if you have not already contracted I wish you to make the contract with M^r Alderson¹⁵⁷ at 200 dollars a year making the alterations in the schedule which he requests.

I am sir

your obedient servant

Abraham Bradley jun

Assist. Postm. Gen^l.

John G. Blount Esq.

Postmaster

Washington N. C.

Addressed:

Free

Abraham Bradley jun.

Assist. Postm. Gen^l.

John G. Blount Esq.

Postmaster

Washington N. C.

¹⁵⁷ Captain John Alderson. See Abraham Bradley, Jr. to Blount, August 22, 1800; Will Orr to Blount, September 8, 1800; and Joseph Habersham to Blount, November 25, 1800, in this volume.

[enclosure]

Germainton [Hyde County] 15th Sepr 1800

Sir

I observe in the gazettes your Invitation to persons dispos^d, to Carry the mail from Washington, by Bath & Woodstock, to germainton—I propose to Carry that mail for two hundred & Seventy five dollars pr year, on Condition of receiving payment quarterly—from which Sum I am willing to rebate Seventy five dollars on condition the times of leaving & arriving may be altered to the following—to leave Washington on Thursday at six in the morning — and arrive at germainton on friday at Eight in the morning — & to leave germainton at noon on friday & arrive at Washington on Saturday at four oclock in the afternoon —

permit me to remark to you that to make the whole journey from the one to the other of these towns in one day would be Extreemly difcult & often Impossible by reason of a ferry of five miles width between woodstock & germainton which Especial-ly in the winter season, Can very rarely be Cross^d. otherwise than in the night — with these observations I take the liberty of submitting the foregoing to your Consideration.

& altho I have not the honor to be personally known by you am never the less —

Sir

your most obed^t

J. Alderson

Free

Addressed: Joseph Habersham¹⁵⁸ Esquire
Postmaster general
City Washington
Washington mail

[enclosure]

I John* Alderson*

do swear

that I will faithfully perform all the duties required of me, and abstain from every thing forbidden by the law in relation to the

¹⁵⁸ Joseph Habersham, Jr. (1751-1815) was a Georgian who served in the Revolution and in the Georgia legislature and the ratifying convention in 1788. He was appointed Postmaster General by Washington in 1795 and served until 1801. *Dictionary of American Biography*, VIII, 70.

* Written in longhand. The rest of this paper is printed.

Sworn before the subscriber
for the _____ of _____ this
day of _____ A. D.

To* be* taken* by* your* clerk* or* assistant*

New York 29th September 1800

Sir

I have thot proper to advise you of the verry advanced price of Naval Stores. The prices quoted at foot, can now be readily obtained, & the probability is that they will stand at that price for some time. I remain Sir

Tar 30/	} All Scarce
Turpentine 22/	
Rozin 24/	
Pitch same —	
Spirits Turpentine 5/ pGalo	

ppost [*sic*]

* Written in longhand. The rest of this paper is printed.
¹⁵⁹ Possibly Robert Hardy of Edenton. "Census 1790," in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 396; also below in this letter.

Will Orr to John Gray Blount

Washington Oct. 4th 1800

Dear Sir

Your Letters p^r. Marshes Sloop and Cap^t. Chadwick & Via New Bern came to hand in time and agreeable to your instructions there in the business has been conducted as nearly as possible — The property has been sold at the following prices & bought in by Col^o. [Thomas] Blount. Hallridge's lot £400 — that adjoining Longhead £100-10.0. 1 Yoke oxen £20-11-0[,] Bay mare \$50 — Colt 13\$ [,] 13 head sheep. £12-17-0. — Total amount £497-18.0 which leaves a balance now due on the Judgment of £9s-2-0 — no person bid on the property but Hardy¹⁵⁹ & he run it up to the above prices & he was cautious not to bid more the value of anything (Sheep & Oxen excepted) for fear it Should be bid off to him & which I endeavored to make him believe would be the case after I discovered that the property would not Sell for its value — The Mills & Plantation of R[ichard?] B[lackledge?]. was Set up or rather the Title of J.G.B. thereto for which M^r. Hardy bid £50 — finding no other person would bid he Said he would withdraw his bid & done So. & W^m Kennedy (with whom I Suppose he consulted) I was told observed he had a right to withdraw his bid, In consequence of that bid I have requested M^r. Bonner not to make any return on the Execⁿ. until the arrival of M^r. Woods¹⁶⁰ in Order, [2] that I may obtain his opinion on ——* as well as to the return on the Exeⁿ. being properly made—Hardy also contended that the title of the Grey Horse was in you & would not be convinced to the contrary until after he had a Jury Summon'd to try in whom the title of that Horse did lay — He however in a very few minutes after was convinced when he found he had the expence of the Jury t^o. pay—Bonner has not paid the money to Hardy on my promise to him that I would myself carry it to Edenton in case M^r. Woods did not arrive in time or would not carry it on So as to have it there on the 6th Inst. — I had cash Sufficient to pay up without borrowing — M^r. Leray offered to lend me what he could raise without asking — There was in the Trunke 844\$ rec^d. fr. Chadwick \$341-15 Cts & of Dessaux on J. Wallace order 22.75 — total \$1207 90/100 balance left after paying Bonner \$12-10——

¹⁶⁰ Benjamin Woods, a Blount lawyer. See Lewis Meminger to Blount, February 11, 1796, n.39, in this volume.

* Manuscript torn.

Ja^s. Maxwells¹⁶¹ Land was exposed to Sale on the 3rd Inst^t at the instance of Maynard. I forwarn'd the Sheriff from Selling in consequence of that no person bid—perhaps my doing so may be the cause of Some Exⁿ. being levied on that as your property — I therefore mention it on a Supposition that it may be necessary for something to be done to prevent it; B Blounts¹⁶² was also exposed the Same day & on the Same account Maynard was present. B. drew a Pistol & told M, that if he did bid he B. would Shoot him — however, M Sallied about until he got near or about the corner of Clamen's [3] & then bid on which B. immediately [fired?]* at him, his direction was good but no damage was done. M. had to make his escape, I observe by your Letter of the 28th Inst^t. via New Bern that you have not rec^d. Jesse Cobbs letter that with others I inclosed & directed to you p^r. Cap^t. Anthony. if you have not yet rec^d. them it will be well to Send for them before you come up — they may be of consequence, some of them I did not open, I will write M^r. Cobb the cause of his letter not being answr^d ——* I have made a barter with Ben Atkinson — Oil for Brandy Bbl. for Bbl he has taken 3 bbls. Oil & I have rec^d. 2 Bbls of the Brandy its good but new, let me know whether you will have it Sent to the Castle or not, The Juniper is not yet got for I have not been able to hire a hand for Gibbs has employed every negro that could be had — I may probably have it got next week — it appears latterly that misfortunes are entailed on you — Edie on Sunday night the 28th Ultim^o. was drowned, She was found on the 2nd Inst^t. [.] from the different circumstances of the business related to me, She was drunk when drown'd[.] I herewith Send you Some Letters & Papers all Well — Compliments to the family & am as usual.

Yours, &c.
Will Orr.

Mr. Neale keeps yet very low. & I think the chances 5 to 1 against his recovery in fact nothing keeps him alive but his Poison which is obliged to be administered ¹⁶³ — M^{rs}. Neale is well

¹⁶¹ James Maxwell was a small slaveholder of Beaufort County. *Second Census: 1800*, Beaufort County.

¹⁶² Probably Bryan Blount, a wealthy Beaufort slaveholder. *Heads of Families* [1790], 126; *Second Census: 1800*, Beaufort County.

* Manuscript torn.

¹⁶³ Neale died in early December, 1800. *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina State Gazette*, December 9, 1800.

P. S. Since writing the within, _____* informs me that he & Maynard have Settled their business, & all Suits &c. withdrawn _____* B Blount Maynard pays the Cost of all _____* instituted on either Side, also pays Maxwells _____* & Blounts pay's Maynard 210\$ -

John G Blount esqr.

Shell Castle

4 Oct. 1800

W^m Orr

Henry Peterson¹⁶⁴ to John Gray Blount

Dear Sir, Washington 9th of Octobr. . 1800.

I am inform^d, you clame part of the Lands in tennessee that was Loomis^s,¹⁶⁵ — I'd wish you to wright on by post to Halifax what part you clame—as I am Interested and Clame the 4th part [b]y† Marr[y]ling—E Waltersun [?],, of Bertie,, wright by the 1st of the Supery Court,, at which time I will be there—I am with respect yours &C.

Henry Peterson

Addressed: John, G., Blount Esqr,
Washington

Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount

Raleigh 11th. October 1800.

My Dear Sir,

In the beginning of September I removed my family up to this under an apprehension that New Bern would be again afflicted with the Yellow fever. Both my family and myself suffered so much last fall that [I] had determind to ayoid the like again if possible. It appears however that I had removed when there was no occation and instead of getting into a healthy Country I have come into a very Sickley one. The last accounts I rec^d. from New Bern (3^d. Octbr.) it was remarkably healthy & no symptoms of Yellow fever, here & from this westerly to the mountains

* Manuscript torn.

¹⁶⁴ Unidentified.

¹⁶⁵ Possibly Jonathan Loomis, a Blount physician. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 62, n.109.

† Illegible.

is, and, has been very Sickly. My Son Richard has been severely attacked by the fever, & M^{rs}. . Spaight has had three attacks of Ague & fever. I was up two weeks ago to Salisbury to see about Wade's debt, and I found the people generally sick & from their accounts some have actually died with all the symptoms of Yellow fever, and others have been *foolish enough* to die with Ague & fevers.

From the best information I have able to Collect Adams will not have more than 3 votes in this State & may probably have but one or two. It is said that in Fayetteville Martin¹⁶⁶ will certainly be elected. In Wilmington its doubtful, but generally supposed Brown will be elected, but it is still possible that Ashe¹⁶⁷ may. The Jefferson Candidate its said will certainly succeed in Morgan,¹⁶⁸ Winston Will be elected in Stokes &c.¹⁶⁹ The Contest in Salisbury between Macay, & Stokes, is doubtful both parties think they will succeed, I think there is a probability of Stokes being elected¹⁷⁰ — Tatom will beat Alves by a large Majority¹⁷¹ — & old Taylor will be elected for this County, Chatham &c.¹⁷² — & G Alston will beat Haywood for Halifax &c.¹⁷³ In regard to your [2] District I have always supposed that N. Johnston would beat Mayo, but some of the knowing ones here, say to the Contrary¹⁷⁴ — I think he will be so ably supported by Beaufort, Hyde, & Edgecombe, that it impossible for the other counties, if they are really all willing, to prevent his election—Tho^s. Winn it is supposed there is no Doubt

¹⁶⁶ William Martin, the Federalist elector, won in Fayetteville district. *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, November 11, 18, 1800.

¹⁶⁷ Thomas Brown, Federalist, defeated Samuel Ashe. *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, November 11, 18, 1800.

¹⁶⁸ A Republican named Tate defeated Federalist Henderson in Morgan District, *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, November 11, 18, 1800.

¹⁶⁹ Joseph Winston (1746-1815), a Revolutionary veteran who served in the Third, Eighth, and Ninth United States Congresses as a Republican, was elected in Rockingham District, which included Stokes County. He was frequently a State Senator. *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, November 11, 18, 1800. For his biography see *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1837.

¹⁷⁰ Spruce Macay, Federalist, defeated Montford Stokes. *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, November 11, 18, 1800.

¹⁷¹ Absalom Tatom, or Tatum, (Republican) did defeat Walter Alves of Orange County. Alves was a Treasurer of the University of North Carolina and a member of the House of Commons, 1793-1795. For Tatom see William Blackledge to Blount, November 25, 1800, n.206, in this volume; *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, November 11, 18, 1800; Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 147, n.1.

¹⁷² Colonel Joseph Taylor defeated a Mr. Henderson in Raleigh District, which included Wake and Chatham counties. *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, November 11, 18, 1800.

¹⁷³ Gideon Alston, Republican, defeated Judge John Haywood, Federalist, in Halifax District. Haywood, a distinguished judge of North Carolina, had resigned from the bench to defend (unsuccessfully) James Glasgow in the 1800 land fraud trials. Following the trials he was defeated both for the General Assembly and as an elector, and later moved to Tennessee. Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, II, 177; Robinson, *William R. Davie*, 313.

¹⁷⁴ In Edgecombe District the Federalist Nathan Mayo defeated Johnston. *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, November 11, 18, 1800.

of¹⁷⁵ and Hamilton¹⁷⁶ has no opponent. As to New Bern I am of opinion B. Whitfield¹⁷⁷ will certainly succeed unless some thing has turned up since I left it, that I have not heard of. The probable votes for Adams then are Fayette, Wilmington & Salisbury — if either Stokes or Ashe succeeds — he will have only two, if both are elected he will have only one Vote in this State.¹⁷⁸

I have come to the determination to become a Candidate at the next Gen^l. Assembly for the place of Senator in the room of T[imothy]. Bloodworth, whose time expires in March next¹⁷⁹ and whom I'm informed does not intend to offer again. The persons likely to be my opponents are, [William R.] Davie, Judge [John Lewis] Taylor, Benjⁿ. Smith & Alex[ande]^r Martin — I should wish to know whether the Members of the County of Hyde will be as much opposed to me in that election, as the County was in that of Representative. Would it be agreeable to you to sound them, as well as your own County Members & those adjoining (Pitt in particular) and give me information on the subject? — I shall be at New Bern about the 30th of this month, & expect to leave it on the 7th Nov^r. for the federal City.

I hope you have by this time fully adjusted the business with Cobb.¹⁸⁰ I wish it as much for your own sake, as because it will give ease to M^{rs}. Spaight who has been always uneasy least some accident [3] should happen to you before it was finally settled.

M^{rs} Spaight joins me in Compliments to M^{rs}. Blount—I am with Esteem

Your sincere friend

Rich^d. Dobbs Spaight

John Gray Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire

Washington

N. Carolina

¹⁷⁵ Thomas Wynns, Republican, won in Northampton District. *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, November 11, 18, 1800.

¹⁷⁶ John Hamilton, a Republican, was unopposed in Edenton District. *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, November 11, 18, 1800.

¹⁷⁷ Republican Bryan Whitfield defeated Federalist Shepard in New Bern District. *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, November 11, 18, 1800.

¹⁷⁸ Jefferson carried eight electors and Adams four—Fayetteville, Salisbury, Wilmington, and Edgecombe. Stanwood, *Presidency*, 63.

¹⁷⁹ Bloodworth, active in State politics as a Radical, also served in the United States House of Representatives, 1790-1791, and in the United States Senate 1795-1801. David Stone succeeded him. Masterson, *William Blount, passim*; *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 62, 65, 566.

¹⁸⁰ Spaight was financially obligated to Jesse Cobb. John Gray Blount was carrying the suit for payment through the courts, but Spaight was apprehensive that the suit would be used against him by his political enemy, John Stanly. Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy in North Carolina*, 115; Stanly to Blount, April 11, 1799; Spaight to Blount, November 6, December 11, 1800; and William Blackledge to Blount, March 23, 1800, in this volume.

*Benjamin Hodges Blunt¹⁸¹ to John Gray Blount*Rowcliffe Oct^r 13. 1800

Dear Friend

I embrace the opportunity of writing these few lines to you hoping that they may find you enjoying a good state of health and under better Circumstances than I am at Present[.] I must inform you That I am press^d. on Bord of a man of war out of a Brig that Captⁿ. Deshon was in and when I was taken I was robbed of all my papers and for what resan I am Kept here is on acct. of my not having any protection¹⁸² I hope you will send me on a protection as soon as possible and when you write direct on Bord of his Majestyes arm^d. Ship Rowcliffe at Spithead¹⁸³ or else where and I shall Be sure to receive it—I have lost all my wages and venture which amounted To about 60 Pounds [2] But I must inform you that I was taken by an english privateer out of Jersey and carried into Jersey and there condem^d. as a prise Both Vessel and Cargo and I am not in a bit too Good a State of health at present

I remain your Well wisher & friend

Benjⁿ. Hodges Blunt

N. B. Remember me to Co^l. Reding Blount & his family and
Likewise to Captⁿ. M Donald [McDaniel?] & family & my
sister —

Addressed: John Gray Blount
Washington Boford County
In the State of North
Carolina
North America

¹⁸¹ Benjamin H. Blount is listed in the Pitt County Census of 1790 as a single man over 16. No further information has been found about him. "Census 1790," in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 921.

¹⁸² Identification as a United States citizen.

¹⁸³ Spithead on the Isle of Wight together with Portsmouth on the mainland formed the home port of the British navy at this time. G. J. Marcus, *A Naval History of England: the Formative Centuries* (London and Tonbridge: Longmans, 1961), 393.

*Willie Blount to John Gray Blount*Knoxville Oct^r. 18th 1800

Dear Sir,

A few days ago Mr. George W. Campbell an Attorney of this place and a man of good Sense in his profession told me he had been applied to by our Senator Joseph Anderson who acts as agent for P[ierce]. Butler & others, to draw a Bill to foreclose a Mortgage given by David Allison to Norton Prior for a considerable quantity of lands, Some Situate in North Carolina and some in this State on Duck river¹⁸⁴[.] his answer to Mr. Anderson did not amount to a promise to do So — he did not wish to undertake that business until he had a conversation with me on the Subject[,] giving for reason to me that it was his wish to know whether that foreclosure would affect me or any of my friends and if so he would prefer being engaged for me or my friends[,] as he once was applied to by the Executor of David Allison to prevent the operation of an attachment on that land levied on as the property of David Allison — I answered it would not affect me, that it would take some time to know whether it would affect any of my friends, that I would write to you and have your answer by the first of Jan^y. the time the federal Court sits here when I supposed the Bill would be filed, and if it would affect you I did not doubt but you would wish to engage him in your behalf — I do not know the true State of this business, but I think it something in this way, that D. A. mortgaged the land in question to Norton Prior which mortgage was recorded in Davidson County from a copy of the mortgage, & if I am not mistaken there is a conveyance or mortgage from Prior to one Dennison of Havre — De Grace in Maryland for the Same land recorded in Davidson—I think the lands in Carolina are situate in Carteret & Jones & perhaps in Montgomery — I observed that I could not See how proceedings could be had against lands which lay without the limits of any of our Counties, and it is not at this time clear to me that Duck river is in any County — however the object of this letter is to know of you whether you wish to engage Mr. Geo. W. Campbell in case you feel any way interested about the thing and that he may have your answer & instructions on or before the 1st Jan^y next — [2] My sister¹⁸⁵ is desirous to have a copy of

¹⁸⁴ For this story and Andrew Jackson's central role in it, see Bassett, *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*, II, 427-428.

¹⁸⁵ Mary Grainger (Mrs. William) Blount, daughter of Colonel William Grainger of Wilmington. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xviii. Wheeler, *Reminiscences*, lx, gives Grainger's name as Caleb.

the Will of her Father & Brother, will you procure them & forward them to this place? — I have not yet gotten clear of the Ague & fever which I caught in Carolina — the family are all well and desire to be remembered to you & yours I am with affection and in much haste.

Your Ob^t. Servant
Willie Blount

Jn^o. Gray Blount Esq^r.

P. S. If Major Grant¹⁸⁶ the bearer of this letter should deliver it to you he is a man whom I esteem, civilities shown him will be acceptable to me. —

Henry Selby¹⁸⁷ to John Gray Blount

Woodstock [Hyde County] 1 Novem 1800

Sir.

Some time past I purchased at a Sheriffs Sale a piece of Land the property of James Cleves Deceased, which although entered in the year of 84, and considerable improvements made thereon no grant has yet been obtained. I have procured the Sheriffs Deed, which in addition to granting me the premeses as usual also enumerates all entrees warrants and other papers touching the Same — I wish to know whether Such a transfer will entitle me to a grant in my own name, and whether it will be previously necessary to have the deed proven in Court. I will thank you for advice on this subject, stating in what manner I can perfect a Title. — The Warrant I am in possession of *Also*.

I lately have acquired an assigned warrant, for another piece of Land, and wish to know if any thing more is necessary by way of entitling me to a grant in my own [2] name — The entry producing this warrant was made the present year.

You may possibly smile at my Ignorance, in being thus at a loss on matters that you may deem so trivial, but in my opinion so complicated is the Laws on this subject, that to be a competent Judge would require more skill in Law affairs than I apprehend

¹⁸⁶ James Grant, a lawyer, was formerly an agent and associate of William Blount. Masterson, *William Blount, passim, e.g.*, 312.

¹⁸⁷ The yearly Senate Journals show that Henry Selby sat in the North Carolina Senate for Hyde County nine times between 1797 and 1808, but not so often as given in Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 213.

many of the professional herd possess — Therefore it is not to be wondered at that I who am not even a Justice of the Peace should be deficient.

I will thank you to advise me speceally on this subject, if not before, by the next post, so that I can do what is needfull timely to transmit my papers by the Hyde Members

Excuse my so trespassing on you — And permit me to be with unabated respect

Yr mo obt Servant
Hen Selby

Addressed: John G. Blount esquire
Merchant
Washington.

P Mail

Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount

New Bern 6th. November 1800

Dear Sir,

I wrote to you from Raleigh some time past but have not had the pleasure to receive an answer.

Yesterday Mr. Edw^d. Harris informed me that you & Cobb had not settled the business¹⁸⁸ in the manner you had proposed, and and [*sic*] expected that he would accede to. He did not then know that the Execution had Issued—I got Mr Woods to enquire to day respecting it this day & he has just now [written?] that it Mr. John Stanly had got it out, & that it was directed to the Sheriff of Craven County to execute &^c. but whom I think has not yet got it, (I have not seen him) [.] I am of Opinion that Stanly's intentions are to keep it in his hands untill I set out for Congress, and then put it in the Sheriff's hands to levy on my personal property, which would be a very disagreeable circumstance, and would alarm M^{rs} Spaight much more than if I were on the Spot —

Captⁿ. James Taylor¹⁸⁹ who is here, informed me this morning that he expected you over here to confirm a Contract he made

¹⁸⁸ A long-standing effort by Blount to get a bond in which he and Spaight were both financially obligated. See John Stanly to Blount, April 11, 1799; and Spaight to Blount, October 11, December 18, 1800, in this volume.

¹⁸⁹ Inspector of the Revenue and Surveyor for Beacon Island, in charge of the construction of a fort on Beacon Island, Ocracoke Inlet. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 216, n.1; *Executive Journal*, I, 325.

with Cap^t. Jn^o Wallace respecting a quantity of shells and I was in hopes that you would have been here to night I must leave this for the federal City on Sunday, if possible, but I wish, if it could be done, that this business should be first Settled. I am in hopes to see you by Saturday by which day the Sherriff will be in Town. I am with Esteem

Your friend
Rich^d. Dobbs Spaight

John Strother to John Gray Blount

Asheville Nov^r. 7th 1800 —

Sir

I shall set out for Georgia the first of Next month, I am promised by Ward a Tract of land on the Oconey¹⁹⁰ in part [payment?] of the bonds I hold for you on him — I think it best to accept the offer provided the land is worth attending to, as the old man has so fixed his property, that nothing can be had, if he is sued, — I shall at all events see the land and if it will command any thing, I shall take it, unless otherwise directed — The Other lands in Georgia I am afraid will be troublesome to come at, if they can be had at any rate — It was expected when I was in georgia that the Gen. Assembly of that State, which will be in Session when I go — will take up the proceedings on the Sales of the lands made by [Sheriff] Whitney & that something definate would be done in that business, as the Judges of the State was to meet about the same time to decide on similar cases.

I have taken the greater part of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants in the division aloted to me by the Marshel — & expect to compleat that business [2] in this month,¹⁹¹ the profits will not exceed two hundred Dollars — it may be less —

I have not had it in my power to collect one hundred Dollars this Summer except from the ferry — I have paid the Tax on 150,000. Acres of land in this county[,] amount 250. Dollars, in the quantity of Land I have selected out a number of small pieces which will in time sell, but not so many pieces as I could

¹⁹⁰ Oconee River, in east-central Georgia.

¹⁹¹ Strother was engaged in taking the Federal Census of 1800. Strother to Blount, September 8, 1800, in this volume.

have done, if there was no Brittain^s—U-s¹⁹² & a few others in the county, whom Altho they appear friendly, I cannot believe but what the Spectulation is still poison to their minds — a proff this they have lately given when I was in Georgia, by breaking up the ferry and giving the profits thereof to [Phillip] Hoodenpyle on his Turnpike—The Intentions of that cursed Turnpike law¹⁹³ I did not on its passage foresee neither could I have supposed that Hoodenpyle would, from what passed between him and myself have been capable of the attempt he has since made, and accomplished — for he pledged his Word & honor to me that he would [3] take his road across the ferry to the Spring and never attempt to avoid it — however I might have known that honor was as easy sacrificed as pledged, and far more convenient to be sacrificed than kept sacred when interest comes in competition. —

From the nature and manner in which the order of court respecting the Turnpike was passed I cannot bring myself to think they are agreeable to the Intentions of the Act of the Gen^l. Assembly — I have sent by the members from this County a memorial together with copies of the proceedings of the Court & have in that memorial Stated nothing but obstinate facts, however it might as well be otherwise, for I expect but Little attention will be paid to it — unless the members from this county will Speak independant & impartial; which I hope they will—I have wrote to some few friends on the Subject — the object of my memorial is to get the Law repealed — on the principals of its not being Acted upon by the Court agreeable to the true intent and meaning thereof; which I attempt to shew by official copies of their proceedings — I think it [4] would require but little ingenuity to get it effected, or at least to get the road Established crossing the ferry to the Springs &^c as pointed out in the prayer of my memorial — That the Court have not been governed by the Law is plai[n]* to be seen by any Impartial eye —

I have had no intelligence from Mr. [William?] Orr or Mas[on]^{*194} of what they have done, perhaps they have wrote to you — the lands must sell the 26th Instant, and it has been with

¹⁹² The Brittain family, especially James and William, were politically powerful in Buncombe County and were anti-Blount. The "U-s" are unidentified. Strother to Blount, August 16, 1801, in this volume; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 53-54.

¹⁹³ An act of the legislative session of 1799-1800 granting the Buncombe County Court authority to contract with Hoodenpyle in the construction of a turnpike from Barnett's station, by Warm Springs, to the Painted Rock, and from Warm Springs to where the head of Wolf Creek crosses the State line. *Laws of North Carolina* (Session of November, 1799), 24.

* Words obscured by manuscript repair.

¹⁹⁴ John T. Mason, a Blount agent. Benjamin Orr to Blount, April 2, 1800, in this volume.

difficulty I could keep it off that Long — my good Sir permit me to observe that I have not received a line from you This summer — I have wrote repeatedly, but am afraid our correspondence is intercepted, for what purpose I cannot conceive — write by the bearer who will hand it safe — If I get any thing in Georgia worth attention I will proceed from that State direct to Washington —

Please present my compts to M^{rs} Blount & family — & believe me with respect your ob^t H^{ble} Serv^t

John Strother

William Blackledge to John Gray Blount

New Bern Nov^r 7th 1800

Dear Sir)

Mr. Jones has written me several times to know what determination you had Come to on the Subject of the lands he gave you time to secure, but I have never thought but once to speak to you about it when we have been togathur — and I have really forgot what you then said — I wish to learn that I may know how much to give in for him —

He has also Written to Shepard to take the Negroes into possession unless you have a mind to keep Jim at 70 dollars payable in a year, I know nothing about the agreem^t as to the Negroes or lands, but think it would be a pity to lose the Negroes if they Can any how be Saved at the prices he offered them at at first, and only mention this for your government —

Inclosed is a land Warrant Richard [Blackledge] sent express for to me twice & Harris Could not find where he had laid it till today. Will you be so good as to forward it to him as quick as possible, as he wants to get the Grant out this Assembly, & has to run the land yet — Whitfield¹⁹⁵ is elected by more than One hundred Majority to a Certainty in this district — With respects to M^{rs}. . Blount I remain

Your Obd^t Serv^t. .

W^m Blackledge

Whitfield has a Majority 240 on the whole poll

John G. Blount Esq^r. .

¹⁹⁵ A Jeffersonian elector. See Spaight to Blount, October 11, 1800, n.177, in this volume.

*John Wallace to John Gray Blount*Shell Castle Novem^r 7th. 1800.

Dear Sir

Your letter by Captⁿ Williams came Safe to hand, with the potatoes, & four Stocks of Juniper, five he had but lost One of them over board On the Swash, he was to put them On board of Bar^s. Chadwick but he would not take them.

Capt^t. Taylor has not yet come home but as soon as he does I will close the Shell contract With him & write you.

Pinkham has not yet returned with Any Mullets or Should Send you a Barrel. I am Glad to hear you are providing oil Barrels. M^{rs} Wallace & Myself are coming to pay you a Visit About the Middle of december at which time I will thank you to have me got at Some convenient Landing fifteen Sixteen cord of Good wood I would wish to have it cut Just Six foot long as it Makes two-Lengths for our fire places.

When I am at Your place I would be very happy if your Brother Thomas Blount could be there, as I very much want us all to be together.

We had no Election here, the wind blew so hard that day that we could not get On Shore, & if we had there would not have been more than ten Votes, which would have been equally divided [2] M^{rs} Wallace Sends up M^{rs} Blounts Cotton & I will Send you four Barrels of oil by the first Opperv.

no News of the Flounder, or [Two] Sisters but Suppose they both have Arrive before this Day. the Regulator is here, I Suppose She will Sail to Day, provided the wind breezes. — I have Seen M^r Swain & Desired him to See you as soon as he gits up Which he says he will do. write how your Election goes: please to push Tho^s. Smith to get to Beaufort Court to prove My Bro. Wises will[.] Court is the 3^d. Monday in this Month. We are all well at the Castle With respect. &

Esteem —

John Wallace

Jn G. Blount Esq^r.Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r.

Merchant

Washington —

p^r. Cap^t. Tho Smith

William Wilson¹⁹⁶ to John Gray Blount

Blounts Creek 9^h Novem^r. 1800

Dear Sir

An old woman named Nan or Nancy was taken from this to the Jail in your Town a few days ago under a suspision of being the cause of her late mistress death — I have nothing to say more then that I find on the investigations I have made here, there is a good deal of malice against her, and I understand She was cruelly treated on the way to prison — I cannot doubt her having a fair trial, but I would wish to take the Liberty to request that in the mean time, and if in the event She Should be cleared She may be treated with humanity — I am with much respect & esteem

Dear Sir

Y^r. Obliged hbe Servant
W^m Wilson

Addressed: John G. Blount esquire
Washington

Pruson Bowdoin¹⁹⁷ to John Gray Blount

Mr. John Gray Blount

Norfolk Virginia Novem^r. 10th 1800

Sir

Permit me, tho unknown, to address you on a Subject of considerable Import to me viz^t. Mr. John Banks of the former House of Hunter Banks & C^o of this State[.] I think some time in the year 1784 [he] died at Washington, I believe at your House, on his way from Charles Town to Richmond, & his Books of Accounts were committed to your Care, or at least to a Gentleman of Your Name in the Town of Washington, which Books were essentially necessary in settling the aforesaid Concern of Hunter Banks & C^o[.] as such I as a component Member of that House, did in Jan^y or Feb^y 1786 employ one Shadrick Perry an Inhabitant of

¹⁹⁶ Unfortunately, this humane man has not been identified. The town of Blount's Creek from which he wrote was downstream from Washington and on the opposite side of the Pamlico River. W. C. Kerr, "Physiographical Map of North Carolina," in Polk, *Handbook of North Carolina*, back cover.

¹⁹⁷ Unidentified.

N^o Carolina to apply for & bring me the Brooks, which he did & I have his Receipt dated 27^h Feb^y 1786 for the money paid him for said Service. I am now under the Necessity of proving the Identity of the Books, have therefore to request as a very singular favor, that you will furnish me with an attested Certificate or any other Voucher in your power, so as to enable me fully to authenticate the Books. There being now a Suit in our High Court of Chancery, relative to the Settlement of the above Concern, in which the proving them to be John Banks's Books is materially necessary, a very considerable Sum depending thereon, so that you will in a very particular manner oblige me, by giving me the most speedy & full Information in your power. I hope from the magnitude of the business you will excuse my freedom in troubling you on the Occasion & believe me

Sir

Yrm^o Obd^t

Pruson Bowdoin

P. S. You will further oblige me by informing if there, if there [*sic*] is not one Ralph Potts in your Town if he did not marry a Daughter of George or Robert Cooke formerly of this State & what issue said Cooke left.

P. B.

Addressed: Mr. John Gray Blount
Merchant
Washington
N^o Carolina

William Blackledge to John Gray Blount

New Bern 14th November 1800

Dear Sir)

I this day rec^d your favor of the 11th Inst^t and hasten to assure you that I shall with great pleasure do any thing in my power to Serve Mr. Neale or yourself, not only in the business mentioned in your letter but any other you may think proper to Commit to me.

It is Circulated here but from what authority I do not know unless perhaps from M^{rs}. Spaight that Jones intends setling Hugh at Mattamuskeet next Spring, tho he has never dropped the

least hint of it to me — Should this be the Case he has probably become desirous of keeping the young negroes for Hugh, and may not be willing to give any longer time for the redemption of them. Should this be the Case (and I really think it probable,) & he has agreed to your keeping the negroes at any stated price, & that price should be such as you could make a good bargain in keeping them at, had you not better say that you are ready to pay the money for them, & let the rest of the property go if nothing Can be done better with it[.] As I do not know the particulars of the agreement between Mr. Jones & yourself, it is impossible for me to know whether the above plan may answer or not, & only suggest it for your reflection —

Mr Ellis was started for Raleigh before your letter Came to hand, And Doctor Smallwood¹⁹⁸ I will see tomorrow, and if he will purchase let you know of it by the next mail — I am with the greatest respect your most Obliged

W^m Blackledge

Addressed: [John G. Blount,
Was[hington]

[fav]ord by
Mr Linto

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Dear Sir,

Tarb^o. 16th Nov. 1800

I wrote to Biddle about Hall's note & requested him to collect the Money & hold it subject to your order, observing to give you notice when it was paid & leave to draw on him for the amount — He answered that he would do So — & I sent you his Letter containing that answer, three months ago. I have not since that time heard from M Biddle on any subject. Our Sister Harvey does not recollect any communication from Willie respecting Armstrong's offer to purchase her Land, except *his* opinion that the offer was a good one; and She Says her confidence in you makes it quite unnecessary that she Should hear more about it, as she shall be perfectly Satisfied with any bargain that you may think proper

¹⁹⁸ Possibly Charles Smallwood of Beaufort County. He was interested in "Pocosin point" land, as were Blackledge and Blount. See William Blackledge to Blount, November 25, 1800; and Smallwood to Blount, January, 1800, n.2, in this volume.

to make for her in respect either to Land or Corn. Mr Poree Says he would with pleasure accomodate you with Money instead of produce for the Crockery if he had it; but he declares that at present he has it not, & cannot command it. your offer of Sugar is highly acceptable. let it come up by the first Boat & out of the Money rec^d. for me by Billy Orr[;] from Capt. Ross you may receive the price of 100^{lb}. [?] if So Much can be Spared.

Please tell Billy to Send me the [2] balance of *that* Money by the first Safe conveyance as I am pressed for it daily by Men to whom I owe it. We are all well here except Jackey who has the 3^d Day ague & fever. Your Sons will be here on Monday next I expect. Sister Polly¹⁹⁹ & her daughter arrived here on Thursday last & are in perfect health. Accept our Comp^{ts}. &^c.

Yours &^c.

Tho. Blount

Addressed: John G. Blount, Esq^r.
Washington

fav^d by
Mr Parker

John Wallace to John Gray Blount

Shell Castle Nov^r. 20th 1800

Dear Sir

Inclosed you have bill from Captain Taylor also a letter of Orr to the Secretary at War, before this comes to hand you will hear that Our commissioners to France have compleated the Treaty with that Nation²⁰⁰ as it appears from New York papers of November 8th. by the Two Sisters which arrived to day. No News of the Flounder Since your letter, but expect her Hourly, if She comes In in time Shall come to Washington to lighten down the New Ship if not we shall be able to lighten her here as The Flounder Beaver, Lucy, Galleot & Sisters are all here at the Spot. This is done in a hurry I have not time or chance to send the Oil or fish but will do it by the Regulator Or Flounder.

I am not able to inform you what time M^{rs} Wallace & Myself Shall be able to come up, but it will not be before January as we

¹⁹⁹ Mrs. John Gray Blount.

²⁰⁰ A convention with France was signed on September 30, 1800, ending the quasi-war. McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, II, 527-529.

have got Our provisions wood & C. for the year to get home before we leave it, but will write you before we come.

I have got David Weatherspoons promise by Captain Taylor to have My bill paid in corn at the Newbern cash price at Christmas which is to be left to Devereaux & James M^c.Kindley, which (corn) I shall send the Sisters for in a few Days. My pork also I [2] expect to get from that place. — Cap^t. Taylor & Myself will try to be in Washington together as he talks [?] of the Flounder & Beaver to transport the Shells from Shell Island to Beacon Island,²⁰¹ & thinks of Buying of them, as they are old & we can sell them, also it may answer a good purpose for you. And lighters of Two hundred & fifty or Two Hundred Barrels are the right Size for this navigation[.] the Sisters which Wade Owns half of is of that Size & one that Reuben Wallace²⁰² is gone upon to day to Launch which Will be down in a few weeks[as?] lighter for Devereaux's Brig[.] I can have as many of them built as will do for This Navigation On good Terms[.] pray Inform M^{rs} Blount that we are all well & have not yet time to have the Childrens Shoes Made but Shall be done as soon as possible & Sent up.

I am with

respect Sir your Most Obed^t. Serv^t. —

John Wallace

Jn^o. . G Blount Esq^r.

N. B.

M^r Prescott will take a passager in a few Days in a Vessel now at the Castle back[?] to Cape Frances — I have also received your letter to M^r L William & James Morse but Alderson has not yet come down[;] when he does it Shall be put On board.

Hollowels Letter I opened Supposing it of consequences. I opened it as you were gone

please to Let us know for the General Election of the State for Electors as we have not yet heard —

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r.
Merchant
Washington

Capt Stapleford

²⁰¹ See Richard D. Spaight to Blount, November 6, 1800, in this volume.

²⁰² Probably a relative of John Wallace who worked for the Blounts and Wallace at Shell Castle. See Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 288, 310.

Joseph Habersham to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

[November 25, 1800]

Sir/

I am to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 13th Inst. covering Mr. Aldersons bond and Contract for carrying the Mail from Washington to Hyde Court House²⁰³ and inclosed I send you the counterpart of that Contract executed by Me which I will thank you to forward to him. — for your attention to this business I am much obliged — The terms of the Contract for that route are rather low; after a trial however of one Year I shall know whether it is sufficiently productive to warrant My sending the Mail *once a week* to Hyde Court House and to allow what may be deemed a sufficient compensation for that [Se]rvice[.] I send you a Lock for that —————* and will thank you to purchase a [2] suitable Portmanteau for the Rider the cost of which will constitute a proper charge in your account of contingent expense on transmitting a bill and receipt for the same with your returns. Keys of the Locks for the Portmanteau were sent on a former occasion to the respective Post Masters on the route.

I am respectfully

Sir

Y^r Obed^t s—————*

Jos Habersh[am]

Addressed: John G. Blount esq.
PM of
Washington
N C

[enclosure]

THIS CONTRACT† made the *fifteenth* Day of *August* in the Year One Thousand *eight* Hundred between *John Alderson, Blacksmith of the County of Hyde* of one Part, and *Joseph Habersham* — Postmaster General of the United States of America, of the other Part, WITNESSETH, That the said Parties have mutually covenanted as follows; that is to say: The Said *John Alderson* covenant & with the Said Postmaster General

1. To carry the Mail of the United States, or cause it to be carried from *Washington by Bath & Woodstock to Hyde ch or Germantown & from Hyde ch by the same route to Washington once a week.* at the Rate of *fifty Dollars* for every Quarter of a Year, during the Continuance of this Contract.

²⁰³ See Abraham Bradley, Jr. to Blount, [with enclosures], September 28, 1800, in this volume.

* Manuscript torn.

† Written words are in italics. The rest is a printed form.

2. That the Mail shall be delivered at each Post-Office in the said Route, at the Times specified in the Schedule hereto annexed, on Penalty of *one* Dollar for each Hour which shall elapse between any Time so fixed, and the Time of the Mail's actual Arrival, to be deducted from the Pay of the said *John Anderson* unless *he* shall make it appear to the Satisfaction of the said Postmaster General that the Delay was unavoidable.

3. If the Delay of Arrival of the said Mail continue until the Hour of Departure of any depending Mail, whereby the Mails destined for such depending Mail lose a Trip, the said *John Alderson* shall forfeit *five* Dollars, for every such Failure, to be deducted from *his* Pay, unless *he* shall make it appear to the Satisfaction of the Postmaster General that such Delay was unavoidable.

4. That the said *John Alderson* Shall be answerable for the Persons to whom *he* shall commit the Care and Transportation of the Mail, and accountable for any Damages which may be sustained through their Unfaithfulness or Want of Care.

5. That *Thirty* Minutes after the Delivery of the Mail at any Post-Office not named in the annexed Schedule, on the aforesaid Route, shall be allowed the Postmaster for opening the same, and making up another Mail to be forwarded.

6. That if the said *John Alderson* or *his* Agents, charged with the aforesaid Mail, shall pass any Post-Office without stopping the Time allowed for opening and making up a Mail, unless sooner discharged by the Postmaster, *he* shall forfeit *five* Dollars, for every such Failure, to be deducted from *his* Pay.

[2]

7. That if the Person or Persons to whom the said *John Alderson* shall commit the Transportation of the Mail do proceed without it, or do not make a proper Exchange of the Mails, where such Exchange is statedly to be made, and instead thereof shall carry back the same Mail, which *he* or they brought to such Place of Exchange, it shall be considered as a whole Trip lost, and double the Sum allowed the said *John Alderson* for one Trip, to be calculated in Proportion to the Value, or Sum allowed for the whole Number of Trips to be performed, shall be deducted from *his* Pay, as a Forfeiture for such Failure. And a similar Deduction shall be made for every Trip lost during the Continuance of this Contract; unless it shall be made to appear, to the Satisfaction of the said Postmaster General, that such Trips were not lost through Neglect, but by unavoidable Accident.

8. That the said *John Alderson* will enter into Bond, with two sufficient Sureties, in the Sum of *Three hundred* Dollars, for the faithful Performance of this Contract on *his* Part; which Bond shall be sent to the General Post-Office, or delivered to the Postmaster at *Washington* by or before the *thirtieth* Day of *September* next.

9. That upon reasonable Complaint made by the Department of the Post Office, against any Carrier of the said Mail, for Negligence or Misbehavior, such Carrier shall be forthwith discharged. That when the said Mail goes by a State Waggon, it shall be invariably carried within the Body of it; and that when it stops at Night, it shall be put in a secure Place and there be locked up.

And the said *Joseph Habersham* Post-master General as aforesaid, covenants with the said *John Alderson* to provide Portmanteaus and Bags necessary for containing the Letters and Newspapers which shall constitute the aforesaid Mail, and pay the said *John Alderson* for the Carriage thereof as aforesaid, at the Rate aforementioned, quarterly, in the Months of April, July, October and January; the Penalties for Failure (if any) being first deducted.

And it is mutually covenanted and agreed by the said Parties, that this Contract shall commence on the *first* Day of *October* next, and continue in Force until the *thirtieth* Day of *September* inclusively, which will be in the Year One Thousand *Eight Hundred and one* IN WITNESS whereof they

have hereto interchangeably set their Hands and Seals the Day and Year first above written.

Signed, sealed and delivered
by *Jos Hebersham*
in the Presence of
Abraham Bradley jun^r

Jos Habersham
Post M^r. Genl

THE SCHEDULE

Subject to Alteration by the Post-master General; be previously stipulating an adequate Compensation by an extra Expenditure that may be occasioned thereby.

Leave Washington every Thursday at 6 a.m. & Arrive at Hyde C.H. on Friday at 8 a.m.

Returning

Leave Hyde C.H. every Friday at 12 noon & Arrive at Washington on Saturday following at 11 P.M.

William Blackledge to John Gray Blount

New Bern 25th. . Nov^r 1800

Dear Sir)

Mr. . Harris before he left this Hide Court had informed me that Gen^l. . Harget,²⁰⁴ had an Execution levied on his property for \$1000 — which he was really pushed to raise, & wanted me to try & sell his Office & Lot. Not seeing any prospect of making Sale of his Lot, & falling in with the Gen^l. yesterday at hazzard in the Street, I ventured to Broach the Subject to him, in Order to find if he was pushed, & if not to see if some easier terms could not be procured, & upon representing things in their proper light & reasoning a little with him, & shewing him that money was not to be borrowed here, he has authorised me to write to Harris to this effect, That if Harris will raise him 250 Dollars at Craven December Court, & let his judgment go on Interest that he will Indulge till after January Court, for the rest, he would

²⁰⁴ Probably Frederick Harget, a Revolutionary War officer and militia colonel of Jones County, who served frequently in the North Carolina House of Commons and in the State Senate. Appointed a member of the Council of State in 1786, he was also named a delegate to the North Carolina Conventions of 1788 and 1789, and was a trustee of the University of North Carolina in 1789. Clark, *State Records*, X, 944, 949, XIII, 784, XVIII, 117, XX, 2, 37, 476, XXII, 747, 748, 896; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 221.

rather have more if Mr. Harris Can raise it, but will [take?] this sum on these terms & wait for the Balance, & that he will meet Harris here the first of of [sic] the Court to know whether he will Close with the offer or not.

Gen^l. . Harget left Raleigh the 20th. . that is last Thursday and says that party spirit runs high between Federals & Antifederals, that even the door keepers are elected upon these principles and that the anti's have a decided Superiority in point of numbers but still he says all hands seem to think that Davie is to be Senator, owing to his being Instrumental in making the French Treaty,²⁰⁵ of which there is some Account in the papers. Tatom he says will Nominate Davie & support. Is not this Strange?²⁰⁶ R. D. Spaight & [David] Stone are held up by the Antis. [John L.] Taylor²⁰⁷ & Davie by the Fed's [. Blake] Baker will not resign his Attorney General Ship [,] this please tell Harris — If he should, the Gen^l. . says that Harris will stand a very fair chance to succeed him — perhaps Mr. Attorney may be Judge,²⁰⁸ if So Harris will certainly be strongly pushed.

Since writing the above I learn that J. L. Taylor is postively withdrawn from the nomination of Senator, and that Davie only will [2] be pushed on that side the questions; Smallwood will have nothing to do with the Pocason point Land,²⁰⁹ & tells me that Nathan Smith has an Older grant which takes by far the greatest part of my Father & Mr Neales grant, Inclosed is a letter for Edward Harris that Gen^l. Harget brought down from Raleigh & left at Mrs. Frilicks, on his telling me of it & that it was from Harris's brother I took it & Inclosed it to you — We shall all start from this on Thursday for Raleigh — Inclosed is a blank Subpoena which Mr. . Woods says you Wrote him for — I am with Respect

Your Most Obliged & Obd^t Serv^t
W^m. Blackledge

John Gray Blount Esquire

²⁰⁵ The Convention of 1800.

²⁰⁶ Absalom Tatom, a Revolutionary veteran who later held a number of State offices. He represented Hillsboro in the North Carolina House of Commons from 1797 to the end of 1802. Tatom was an ardent Republican; hence Blackledge is amazed at his intention of nominating the Federalist Davie. Tatom died at Raleigh, while attending the General Assembly, in December, 1802. Spaight to Blount, October 11, 1800, n.171, in this volume; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 337; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, December 21, 1802.

²⁰⁷ John Lewis Taylor was a representative in the General Assembly (1792-1795) and a Superior Court Judge from 1798 to 1818, then Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court from 1818 to 1829. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 129.

²⁰⁸ I.e., perhaps Attorney General Blake Baker will be elected to a judgeship.

²⁰⁹ See William Blackledge to Blount, November 14, 1800, in this volume.

[John Strother] to John Gray Blount

Asheville Nov^r 27th 1800 —

Sir

The Lands advertised in this County as your property was sold Yesterday & was bid off to the Governor,²¹⁰ I have made the best reserves²¹¹ the Nature of the case & my information would admit[.] a number of Small Tracts in the bounds of those sold I have reserved as also what was spoken off When I had the pleasure of seeing you last — I informed you in former Letters that I have done nothing of consequence this Summer past—I hope that some people will be as much disappointed when my exceptions are made public as they are gratified by the Sale — I set out in two Weeks for Georgia where from late information I hope to get in possession of some of your Lands but suppose for the Want of W^m. . B[lount]. conveyance to you I may be imbaressed in the Sales — if opportunity should offer — It is Strange that I can get no Letters from the Eastward & I am afraid that mine to that quarter miscarries — [Joseph] Galeses papers²¹² to this district has by some means been detained, but now the Election for Elector is over I hope we may have a free passage to communications from different quarters.

I am extremely uneasy at not getting any information from Mr Orr or Mason — I have [2] written them both _____* but did not feel myself at Liberty so to do —

I have sent by the members from this county a Memorial to the Assembly respecting the Warm Spring road, but unfortunately I did not know who of our friends were in the Gen^l. Assembly untill yesterday & I expect it will be too late to write to them at this time as the fate of the memorial must be decided before any Letters can reach Raleigh

I shall be in Washington about the first of May Next, when I hope to find all my friends well — where is [Jonathan] Price what is he doing, or done this summer past[?] do if you please

²¹⁰ By a 1798 law, if there were no bids for any fraction of a tract of land being sold for delinquent taxes, the whole tract was recorded as sold to the Governor and his successors, that is, it again became public land. John Haywood, *A Manual of the Laws of North Carolina* (Raleigh: Joseph Gales [Fourth Edition], 1819), 602, hereinafter cited as Haywood, *Laws*.

²¹¹ The reference is not clear. Obviously Strother was able (by paying part taxes, settling tenants, or other means) to withhold part of Blount's land from the tax sale. No statutory basis for this has been found.

²¹² The *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, after December 2, 1800, the *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*.

* Four lines illegible.

advise me in that business for I am almost willing to lose sight of it —

I suppose much depends on our Next Chief Magistrate, please let me hear the present General opinion —

J. W.²¹³ from this county I think may be counted on as a friend. Z. B.²¹⁴ is steady & may be — T. L.²¹⁵ you know — but he will say or do but Little on any occasion —

Reiterate my former assurances of respect to Mr^s. Blount & family Col^o. [Thomas] Blount & his family —

I am with sentiments of respect your Most ob^t Hb^{le} Servant —

Q

Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount

City of Washington 28th Nov^r. 1800

Dear Sir,

I rec^d. your favor of the 14th. Instant covering one for Colonel Abisha[i] Thomas. He is in the City tho' I have not seen him, and I am informed has got himself married, but not advantageously. I sent your letter to him by Mr. Claxton the [House of Representatives] door keeper under cover & requested him to let me know if he rec^d. it, but have had no answer yet.

We have done little more than hear the presidents speech and return an answer. We are all pretty calm & in much in regard to the issue of the Presidential election, which appears to depend much on how the Electors of S^o Carolina will vote. I hope Pennsylvania will have a vote tho' I fear their legislature will adjourn without coming to an Agreement on that head.

By acct^s. from Raleigh it appears there are a Majority in each branch Republican, and that a federalist will have no chance of being elected Senator.

Should the Edenton party insist on runing [David] Stone, who

²¹³ Possibly Joshua Williams, State Senator from Buncombe County in the General Assembly in 1800 and 1801, and alternating there with Blount's enemy James Brittain. Blount's other agent, John Carson, however, strongly opposed Williams in 1797. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 54; Carson to Blount, January 24, 1797, in this volume.

²¹⁴ Zebulon Beard sat in the House of Commons from Buncombe County from 1800 through 1803. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 54.

²¹⁵ Thomas Love, a brother of Robert Love, an old Blount friend and associate. Thomas sat in the House of Commons from 1800 through 1809. Arthur, *Western North Carolina*, 128; Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 505-506, 561-562, 616-617; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 54; *Journal of the House of Commons of the State of North-Carolina* (Raleigh: Gaies and Seaton, 1809), 1.

dont want it, I expect it will be disadvantageous to my election. a little time however will decide this question —

As soon as you send me An Taylors draft I shall [2] pay due attention to it, & do the needful, agreeably to such directions as you may send. I hope you have written to [Stephen] Harris the Sheriff on this business as well as to Edw^d. Harris to see that Your Executions are duly issued ag^t. Palmers²¹⁶ Estate: & A. Hall,²¹⁷ otherwise Arnett might neglect them —

No official communications have arrived as yet to confirm the acc^t. of the treaty being signed by our Envoys with France, tho' I think its probable it is true, or at least that they will conclude a treaty, if they have not already. Do take half an hour now & then from business & let me hear from you.

Please present my Compliments to M^{rs}. Blount

I am with Esteem

Dear Sir,

Your most Obt. Serv^t.

Rich^d. Dobbs Spaight

John Gray Blount Esqr.

Rich^d. D. Spaight

Addressed: John G. Blount Esqr.

Washington

N^o. Carolina

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarbo. 29th Nov. 1800

Dear Sir,

I hoped ere now to have seen your Messenger with the money — when shall I see him? let him when he comes bring the money rec^d. for me by Billy Orr from Cap^t. Ross — for without it I can't get to Raleigh where I ought to be if possible by the middle of next week — I left at Readings my saddle & Bridle which I want daily — I will thank you to tell Tom or John to get them to Washington & send them from there lashed behind Schenck's or Bric-

²¹⁶ Joseph Palmer had been a partner with Blount in a sawmill and in general plantation affairs at Piney Grove. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, 235, 459, 489-490.

²¹⁷ Almond Hall was a Wilmington printer of some wealth. See Spaight to Blount, December 18, 1800, in this volume; Alexander McDonald Walker (ed.), *New Hanover County Court Minutes* (Bethesda, Maryland: Alexander M. Walker, 4 parts, 1958-1962) part IV, 49, 91, 93, 97. The details of this transaction are not known and "Arnett" is unidentified.

kell's Chair — Gales was elected public Printer by 95 votes against 71, on the first balloting — this shows that we have a Republican Gen. Assembly²¹⁸ — but Gentlemen who have been at Raleigh since they met say they will turn out the present Governor²¹⁹ & put in his place J. B. Ashe or Col. Jo. Taylor — it is considered certain that D. Stone will be the Senator — who are to be the Judges No one pretends to know —

We are all well & send Love, Compliments &c. to all of your family —

Yours &c.

Thos. Blount

General Person is certainly dead & is said
to have died without a will—a good Land-
Fall For Sharpe,²²⁰ I take it, as his Estate
is considered worth \$1.000.000—

Addressed: Mr. John G. Blount
Washington

fav^d. by
Mr Brickell

Mr Orr arrived here this Evenine &
will proceed on his journey early
to-morrow morning—I shall start
for Raleigh on Monday morning & arrive
there on Tuesday. Saturday night 29th.
Nov. 1800

T. B.

²¹⁸ Joseph Gales defeated Federalist Abraham Hodge, who had printed various North Carolina papers since 1786. Clarence S. Brigham, *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820* (Worcester, Massachusetts: American Antiquarian Society, 2 volumes, 1947), II, 1431.

²¹⁹ Benjamin Williams. He was re-elected.

²²⁰ Thomas Person (1733-1800) was a Revolutionary soldier and an active Radical politician both before and after the Revolution. He was an avid land speculator and a member of Henderson's Transylvania Company and had amassed a large landed estate before his death. Masterson, *William Blount, passim*; *Dictionary of American Biography*, XIV, 496. Since Person died without issue, Sharpe Blount's relationship to him was probably through Person's sister and through Sharpe Blount's wife, Penelope Little Blount. *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, November 25, 1800; Sharpe to John Gray Blount, December 21, 1800, n.229, in this volume.

James Watson ²²¹ to John Gray Blount

Mattamuskeet [Hyde County] 8th Dec^r. 1800

Sir

If you have sent forward to the printer of The North Carolina Journal the Advertisement For the sale of the 199999 Acres of Land for The taxes of the year 1799 which I wrote you Would be on the 8th of January 1801. I would Thank you to Send me a paper wherein it Is printed by Mr. David Peidge the Bearer Hereof, I shall direct Francis K. Moore one of My Deputies who resides in Germantown To make this Sale and hope you or Some person authorized by you will attend I Am Sir your most Obed^t

&^c &C

James Watson

John G. Blount

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq
Washington

fv

David Peidge

}

Pruson Bowdoin to John Gray Blount

John G. Blount Esq^r

Norfolk Virginia Decem^r. 9th 1800

Sir

Washington

Your much esteemed favor of 26^h Ult^o is at hand & I thank you very kindly for the Information therein contained. Perry the Man who brot me the Books,²²² was a man who drove some Hogs to this place, & I think he said he liv'd near Washington & knew Col^o Blount, which was the reason that I employ'd him to bring the Books; herewith I send Copy of his Receipt, not caring to trust the original to the Casualties of the Mail, if he can certify that he did receive such Books from Col^o [William] Blount & that he brought them to me, should suppose it would be good Testimony, or if M^{rs} Blount your Brothers Widow is living dont

²²¹ Sheriff of Hyde County.

²²² See Bowdoin to Blount, November 10, 1800, in this volume.

doubt she could clear up the matter fully, as I know she was apply'd to sometime before, by one Rourk at the Request of Mr. James Hunter (dec^d) but Col^o Blount being then from home, she would not deliver them; as the proving the authenticity of these Books is very material, many Thousands depending on it if you can by any means assist me in the proof, you will confer a lasting Obligation, & any Expence attending shall be chearfully paid, & as I have unfortunately to do with a very troublesome Man (say H. Banks Brother to John) & one who is dispos'd to take every Advantage that Times & circumstances will permit, must beg leave to observe that whatever proof may be obtain'd, should be as full & explicit as possible & legally attested. I must likewise observe that if I can obtain the desir'd proof within two months from this time it will do. — My D^r Sir my Feelings are really hurt at being under the necessity of requesting such a Favor from a Gentleman with whom I have not had the pleasure of being acquainted but from the Importance of the Occasion hope your goodness will excuse the freedom & should it ever be in my power to render you acceptable Service, be assur'd I should do it with pleasure, & in that Case hope you'll freely command

Sir

Your Obd^t

Pruson Bowdoin

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r
Washington
North Carolina

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

Tarb^o. 15th Dec^r. 1800

Dear Sir,

I got home from Raleigh on friday last & on Saturday morning saw James Bonner here who shewed me your Letter to Willie & told me it was your wish that I could open it. I did so & inclosed it in another cover & requested M^r Bonner, if he should see no person at Raleigh going directly to Knoxville whom he should know to be worthy of trust, to put it into the post office — this I did in consequence of information from Major Grant that he would not return to Tennessee until the last of Jan^y. or first of

Febr^y.[.] Woods will inform you of what he did in the case of Ball's suit ag^t. you — S[amuel]. Johnston²²³ & John Hall,²²⁴ of Warrenton, are our new Judges — & Reading Blount is your Major General — Jefferson is our President & Burr our V. Prest^t. to an absolute certainty — you will see on the other side the poll of Election — We are well & send Comp^{ts}.

I am &C
Tho. Blount

Addressed: John G. Blount, Esq^r
Washington

fav^d. by }
Mr Cook }

[enclosure]

	Jefferson	Burr	Adams	Pinckne
New Hampshire	a .	a .	6 .	6 .
Massachusetts	a .	a .	16 .	16 .
Rhode Island	a .	a .	4 .	4 .
Vermont	a .	a .	4 .	4 .
Connecticut	a .	a .	9 .	9 .
New Jersey	a .	a .	7 .	7 .
Delaware	a .	a .	3 .	3 .
Pennsylvania	8 .	8 .	7 .	7 .
Maryland	5 .	5 .	5 .	5 .
Virginia	21 .	21 .	a .	a .
North Carolina	8 .	8 .	4 .	4 .
New York	12 .	12 .	a .	— .
South Carolina	8 .	8 .	a .	a .
Georgia	4 .	4 .	a .	— .
Tennessee	3 .	3 .	a .	— .
Kentucky	4 .	4 .	a .	— .
	73 .	73 .	— 65 .	65 ²²⁵ .

²²³ Samuel Johnston's long service to the State in many capacities secured him a judgeship of the Superior Court though he was a Federalist. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 91. For his biography see *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1133.

²²⁴ This John Hall was a native Virginian. He served on the Superior Court bench until 1818 and then on the Supreme Court from its inception in 1818 to 1832. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 195.

²²⁵ This tabulation is wrong only in that Rhode Island cast one vice-presidential vote for John Jay instead of Pinckney, thereby preventing the tie that troubled the Republicans. Spaight to Blount, December 18, 1800, in this volume; Stanwood, *Presidency*, 72.

We know that Jefferson's Poll can't be less than above stated & that Adams's can't be greater — Burr has been run with Jefferson in all the states we have heard from; but we are not sure that Pinckney has been in all the States run with Adams — the federalists every where acknowledge that Jefferson or Burr must be president & express a hope that it is the former our Information from the Southern States was bro^t. to Raleigh by Wade Hampton²²⁶ who was himself an Elector in [3] S^o. Carolina — he had charge of the votes of that State —

Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount

City of Washington 18th Dec^r 1800

Dear Sir,

Since I rec^d. your favor covering a letter to Colonel A[bishai]. Thomas, I have not been favored with a line from you. If you have written and sent the bill you expected to receive from Cap^t. James Taylor it has never come to my hands & must have been stopped or miscarried —

I hope you wrote to Edw^d. Harris, respecting the Issuing of your Executions ag^t. Palmer's Estate & ag^t A. Hall of Wilmington Otherwise they might be neglected, or come out too late. I hope you have likewise written to Stephen Harris the Sheriff on the subject to prevent, if possible from levying on my property. I am Sensible that nothing will be left undone, on your part, to prevent any damage, (even to my feeling) from falling on me. Should the bill come on I shall do every thing in my power to expedite the business & return it to you in time. J^{no} Davis has the Deed in Trust & a special power of Attorney, which I sent him from here, in consequence of what passed between us, as I came thru' Washington. We have [2] rec^d. accounts from so many of the States as makes the Election of Jefferson & Burr to the offices of President & Vice President of the U. States, certain. For some days past the Federalists have worn long faces, but within a day or two since they have heard of the Georgia election, they begin to collect in groupes, or small committees, grin horribly, yes they Smile & hold Caucus's, with the Malignant expectation that Jefferson & Burr will each have 73 Votes, and

²²⁶ Wade Hampton (1754-1834), a South Carolina planter and Revolutionary soldier, served in the Fourth and Eighth United States Congresses and as an elector in 1800. He later had a distinguished army career. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1000.

with the Diabolical intention, if they should, to prevent a president being elected (it requiring in that case seven states in the House of Representatives to say which shall be President) or to elect Burr, as the person least agreeable to us, & out of malice to Jefferson. I expect & Hope that Tennessee or Kentuckey, (which have not heard from) will save them the trouble by dropping Burr one Vote behind Jefferson. I have had a severe attack of gout which confined me to bed from the 9th Instant untill yesterday I am now on the mend, able to walk from room to room. I am with regard

Your Sincere friend
Rich^d. Dobbs Spaight

J^{no} G. Blount Esq^r.

William Blackledge to John Gray Blount

New Bern 20th December 1800

Dear Sir)

Your favor by Tommy²²⁷ I this day rec^d. . but not in time to reply

In answer to you as to his boarding with us I reply that it will be perfectly agreeable on our parts if the fare be such as will satisfy him, and my place of residence sufficeently Convenient for him to study at M^r. Harris's Office.

If we continue to reside where we now do it will be convenient enough, but if I should move to the house where JC Bryan²²⁸ lives (as I some[day?] expect to) it would perhaps be rather too far from the Office, however by the time you come to the Superior Court it will be in my power to answer you in point as to my place of residence; as to finding him a bed this I can do, but as to beding we are not as yet in quite so good stock as I could wish & a part of what we have we keep up at the plantation, but beds we have to spare.

I should have taken Tommy immediately home but that my family starts tomorrow for White Oak & will not be here more than a week if that long between this & the Superior Court for

²²⁷ Thomas Harvey Blount, eldest son of John Gray, who was now to read law under Edward Harris.

²²⁸ John C. Bryan, a politician who after 1790 represented Craven County in the House of Commons frequently and in the State Senate occasionally. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 123.

as soon as we return from W. O. we shall go up to the Plantation,
to see about killing our pork[.] with Compliments to M^{rs} Blount
I remain Your most Obligated Obd^t Serv^t

W^m Blackledge

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r
Washington

Sharpe Blount to John Gray Blount

Blount Hall Dec^r. 21st. 1800

Dear Sir/ —

I herewith send to the care of Grove Wright a Barrel [of]
Cyder for you, with a Request to M^r. Wright to forward it as
soon as he can to you, there is one also for Reading which you
can inform him of if you please. Penny²²⁹ has been Very sick
ever since the day I went to Washington last, she was taken on
the night of that day with a pain in her side, it has at different
times been much easier than at others. I have applied two Blist-
ers and neither of them appear to give much relief[.] I sent for
Pillson²³⁰ who says it is a kind of Bastard Plurisy, and will of it
self get easy after a While, however he left Medicine, with di-
rections for use[.] Penny sets up some part of every day, tho
does not go out of her Room, all the rest of us are quite Well, and
all join in Compliments to you & family

Yours &C &C
Sharpe Blount

Addressed: Mr John G. Blount
care of M^r G. Wright }
Greenville } Washington

²²⁹ Penelope Little Blount, Jacob's wife. She was the daughter of Colonel George Little of Hertford County, and through her mother was probably related to Thomas Person, the political leader. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxix; Thomas to John Gray Blount, November 29, 1800, in this volume.

²³⁰ Thomas Pillson of Greenville, shown in the United States census of 1800 for Pitt County as a single man owning three slaves.

*Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount*City of Washington 22^d Decem^r 1800

Dear Sir,

This morning I had the pleasure to receive your favor of the 30th Novem^r. last covering Jas. Taylors Bill on Samuell Dexter Sec^{ty}. of War,²³¹ in favor of J^{no} Wallace for 1800 Dollars. As soon as I rec^d. the letter I ordered my chair & went of to the Departments (they are nearly a mile & a half from where I lodge on the Capitol hill.) to negotiate the business. After a little while I got Mr. Dexter not only to accept, but to give me a Warrant on the Treasurer of the U. S. for the amount without waiting for the ten days sight, which if insisted might have been bad in this case, as the post is so little to be depended on, and instead of 8 or 9 days we must calculate on 20 days—Before I could get the Warrant & go thro' the Account^s of the War Dept^t. office, where it was to be registered, countersigned &^c. the Treasurer had gone from his office to Dinner, & I could not get his draft on the Collector of NewBern to send forward by this days post, I shall do it in the Morning & send it by tomorrows post, and hope it will get there in time —

The Treaty with france²³² is such a one as it would be supposed, be agreeable to the Anglo-feds — Because it barely makes peace between the two republic's & opens a free [2] friendly, & commercial Intercourse between the Citizens of the two nations and leaves to a future time the settlement of all our real differences with france, the adjustment of which might have given umbrage to the rascally & Tyranical Government of England & brought on a war between them & us — Yet such as it is the Essex Junto, or Anglo-feds, find great fault with it, and I am told censure Davie & Murray about it saying that if Elsworth had not had the gout in his head, such a Treaty never had been made — Would to God that Jⁿ. Jay had had the gout & [*i.e.*, in] both head & Stomach, if it could have prevented the British Treaty²³³ from being imposed on us —

If any Opposition should be made to the Treaty in the Senate (where it has been for a week) it falls of course, for the federa-

²³¹ For shell used in the construction of a fort on Beacon Island. See Spaight to Blount, November 6, 1800, n.189, in this volume. Dexter was Secretary of War from May 13 to December 31, 1800. *Dictionary of American Biography*, V, 281.

²³² The Convention of 1800.

²³³ Jay's Treaty with England, ratified June 22, 1795, and violently opposed then and later by Jeffersonians such as Spaight and the Blounts. McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, II, 212-230.

lists have a decided majority in that body. Where Shall we be then? —

J^{no}. Jay has been nominated by the President Chief Justice of the U. S. Vice O. Ellsworth resigned, and the Senate has confirmed the appointment. Quere, there is no man in the U. S. fit for this appointment but J^{no}. Jay. that we must re-appoint a man who has before held it & given it up?²³⁴ I am with Esteem

Your Sincere friend
Rich^d. D. Spaight

N. B. Copy of French Treaty enclosed

J^{no} Gray Blount Esq^r

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.

Washington

N^o. Carolina

Free

Rich^d. . Spaight

Jacob Blount to John Gray Blount

Edenton Dec^r. 23^d. 1800

Dear John,

Yours of the 9^h. Inst^t. came to hand by M^r Salters Boy, the Bearer of this, You express a wish to have John [Gray, Jr.] taught More Arithmetick and Mathematicks, Our Academy²³⁵ will be opened on the fifteenth Jan^y. and I think you had better send him & William²³⁶ Both here, M^r Metcalf one of the Teachers tells me he is well aversed in all the practical parts of the Mathematics, he is a good Arithmatician and Teaches the French language, I suppose as well as any man can, M^r John Young spoke to me about sending his Son here, I can get him boarded at a good house for £40 p^r year that is for Board [wa]shing Mending and lodging, Tuition, £10 p^r year paid quarterly in advance, I will pay every attention to him in my power, I flatter myself the

²³⁴ Jay was Chief Justice from 1789 to 1795, when he resigned. He was succeeded by Rutledge of South Carolina for 1795 only (for he was not confirmed by the Senate) and then by Ellsworth, who was Chief Justice from 1796 through 1800. Jay in 1800 declined to serve and John Marshall was named. Richard Hofstadter, William Miller and Daniel Aaron, *The American Republic* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 2 volumes, 1959), I, 698, hereinafter cited as Hofstadter, *American Republic*.

²³⁵ Edenton Academy, of which Jacob Blount was a trustee, had recently been established by the legislature. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxviii; *Journal of the Senate* [1800], 13.

²³⁶ Probably William Augustus, a younger son of John Gray Blount. Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*, I, 36.

strictest attention will be paid the School by the Trustees, there being fifteen who reside in the Town, Should you and he conclude to send here please give me Early information, for I Apprehend we shall have the School as full as we can admit it untill we can procure more Teachers having not been able to procure but two yet, Mr Archabald has left us and gone to Norfolk, he is too whimsical for any thing, I will write the clerk to Issue the Execution in due time, Suky and myself disagree about his Christian Name²³⁷ you will please inform me [2] I rec^d a letter from Mr Salter to day about his boy[.] his return renders an answer unnecessary, we are all well and Suky Joins in Comp^{ts} to all.

Yours &C

Jacob Blount

P. S. I have wrote two letters to my Sister since her return²³⁸ but have not heard one word about her but what you Wrote me, have you any Information of her please forward the Inclosed

JB

Addressed: Mr. John Gray Blount
Washington

William Shannon to John Gray Blount

Philad^a. 27th Dec^r 1800

D Sir/

I have some uneaseness lest my last enclosing the taxes should not be safe—Will you be so obliging as to let me know first opportunity—I have understood that Dr. John Hall²³⁹ is some where in your Country & like to do very well, which I am happy to hear—Will land bring any thing now in your part; in this place unless they are improved none will sell—You have probably seen in the Newspaper that John Nicholson²⁴⁰ is dead; I think he broke his heart, after many unsuccessful attempts by printing a News paper in Jail to support his small & numerous f[amily]*—Do you think the times will git better [now?]* the

²³⁷ "Suky . . . name." Probably Jacob and his wife could not remember the middle name of Mr. Young's son.

²³⁸ Anne Blount Harvey had returned from Tennessee. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxx, is incorrect in saying she never returned. See John Salter to Blount, September 2, 1800, in this volume. Later she did die in Tennessee as Keith says.

²³⁹ The speculator John Hall. See David Allison to Blount, August 19, 1796, in this volume.

²⁴⁰ The partner of Robert Morris who, like him, had been imprisoned for debt in the fall of 1800. David Allison to Blount, January 7, 1796, in this volume.

* Hole in manuscript.

administration is changed — I cannot help thinking that your N. Carolina Swamps, abounding as the[y] are in Timber & luxurient Soil will some day be valuable, in as much as the demand for Lumber is constantly increasing very rapidly — I lately paid 27½ doll p m for inferior (dressed) Shingles, and other lumber in proportion, Oak Scantling 14/ p h^d. Pine board 3 & 3½ dollars pH^d 5/4 do 5 33/100 pH^d pine Scantling 3 dollars pH^d — Excuse my intrusions, oblige me by a line soon & believe me to be D^Sir

Oblig^d Hb^e Servant
W^m Shannon

Addressed: John G Blount Esquire
Washington
North Carolina

Mail

Benjamin Woods to John Gray Blount

Newbern December 29 1800

Dear Sir

I have too long neglected to give you an account of what was done in your business at Raleigh — At that place I had not the command of pen and ink, and since I returned I have been too much employed —

The suit again Tho. Russell was continued by consent — Mr Baker was not prepared and I thought it would have no good effect to push him & that the cause would grow no worse by a continuance—I forgot that Mr Ore——* perhaps knows too much to be examined in Court & may on a cross examination be compelled to explain the manner in which the bill came into [the defend]ants† possession—It will be well therefore to take his deposition proving the signature of Hussey —

After fully considering the case of Ball²⁴¹ and consulting Mr Haywood²⁴² there appeared to be no room for hope of continuing

* Illegible.

† Manuscript torn.

²⁴¹ Blount's involvement with Joseph Ball and James Hogg stemmed from certificate and land dealing with David Allison. See Willie to John Gray Blount, April 23, 1800, in this volume Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 602-606.

²⁴² Probably Judge John Haywood of Halifax.

the cause or defending to with success — I attempted to negotiate and at length was obliged to submit to the following terms being I believe the very best which could be obtained — viz

The plaintiff was to take his judgment for the amount of principal & interest of the note but execution was not to issue[2] without the express direction of the Ptff or his attorney nor in less than two months — The defendant was to have the privilege at any time within the two months of giving bond with Thomas Blount, & Jacob Blount securities for the payment of the judgment by four annuel & equal installments with interest from the date—upon the giving [of]* which bonds the judgment is to be released but the costs paid by defendant —

I endeavored with all my might to alter the terms in two particulars viz that the interest should run upon the original principal only — and that Reading Blount should be received in the place of Jacob — The negociation was more than once broken off upon these & other difficulties and I found it impossible to obtain the alterations I wished —

The judgment was accordingly entered in the usual form which could not indeed have been avoided if no terms had been offered — I made no engagement that the above terms should be complied with — that was to remain optional with you, & if they are not, the cause is as it would have been if they had been proposed — The time is rather short and I have suffered too much [3] of it to elapse without advising you of the terms — but Mr Hogg assured me that upon his being informed within the time that it was your intention to accept them the time should be prolonged that the accomplishment may be convenient — Mr Hogg also says that if good land in Tennessee with unexceptionable title can be given at a price to be agreed upon (which he says shall be a reasonable price) it is very probable the matter may be settled that way & that he will up his endeavoures to bring about such an accomodation

I shall be exceedingly happy if these ——† come within your ability & can afford [you]† any relief — I lament that no better could be obtained and beg you to be assured that no measure attempt or artifice which was deemed likely to have any effect was omitted to obtain the best —

* Manuscript torn.

† Obscured by seal.

If you upon reflection think it best to accept the terms I wish you would authorize me to inform M^r Hogg So in order to have the time prolonged

I am dear Sir
with esteem
your Ob^t Servant
B Woods

J G Blount Eqr]

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r

Free

Washington

LETTERS FOR 1801

William Polk to John Gray Blount

Jan^y. 6^h. 1801.

Raleigh

Dear Sir.

I have this day rec^d. your letter of the 29^h. ultimo, and being just on the setting off for Hillsborough with my Sons to School wait untill I give you answer.

Memucon Hunt, Pleasant Henderson and myself for ourselves & others laid a petition before our General Assembly relative to our Western Land claims;¹ which was taken up & the petitioners as was the case at Fayetteville in 1794 referred to Congress; this was however accompanied with several Resolutions directing our Senators & requesting the Representatives to further the prayer of the petition[ers] —————* & have directed the Gov^r. to forward —————* which has been done so by him. —————* already written to M^r. Henderson———* [2] subject & think it

¹ This petition sought reimbursement for speculators' claims to Tennessee country lands ceded by North Carolina to the United States in 1790 and subsequently recognized as Cherokee Indian land by the United States Treaty of Holston in 1791. The speculators were again trying to retrieve their loss. In both 1794 and 1801 the petitions were endorsed by the North Carolina General Assembly and sent to Congress, which did not grant direct relief. *American State Papers* (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 38 volumes, 1832-1861), Class VIII, Volume I, 24, 27, 112-113, 164, hereinafter cited as *American State Papers*; *Annals of Congress*, Third Congress, First Session, 1793-1795, I, 1254; Eighth Congress, First Session, 1803-1805, I, 623-624, 877, 1053, 1234, 1301.

* Manuscript torn.

would be well for you to do the same with Some of your Democratic friends who now ride the whirlwind & directs its course.² The purpost of the Petition is similar to that signed at Fayetteville by Thomas Person & others — Mr. Macon, Stone & Franklin ought to be enlisted in the business, with none of whom am I in the habits of coresponding—Henderson[,] Hill & Grove are written to & Holland³ from interested motives will aid the Scheme I hope.

As I shall soon go out of Office I have the prayer of the petition much at Heart for I have become so good for nothing but to delve over Abstracts &C — that when \$1000 annually is taken away I shall be _____* that in the course of a few years _____* become a public pauper.

I am with respect & esteem
Dr Sir your^r ob^t srvt
Will. Polk

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r
Post Master
Washington N. C^a.

Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount

City of Washington 13th Jan^y. 1801

Dear Sir,

I wrote to you on the 22^d Ultimo, and informed you that I had got the Warrant for the Am^t. of Cap^t. James Taylors bill on the Secretary of War, and that I would on the next day, I would get the Treasurer of the U. S. Order on F. Hawks the Collector of New Bern for the Amount,⁴ I accordingly went to the Treasurer the next day & obtained the Order & forwarded by that days post to Major Davis. I hope it got there safe, and in time.

In my last I enclosed you a Copy of the Convention concluded by our Envoys with the French Republic. The Senate have been ever since engaged about it & have not yet made a finish. but the manner in which they will advise the president is known.

² Polk was a Federalist soon to go out of the office of Supervisor of United States Revenue. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 190, n.1.

³ "Macon . . . Holland." Nathaniel Macon, David Stone, Archibald Henderson, William H. Hill, and William Barry Grove were United States Representatives and Jesse Franklin was a United States Senator in the lame duck session of November, 1800—March, 1801. In the next session Stone and Franklin were Senators and James Holland joined the others in the House. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 62, 65.

* Manuscript torn.

⁴ See Spaight to Blount, December 22, 1800, in this volume.

They have agreed to reject the 2^d & 3^d articles — an opposition was made to the 14th but was dropped. They have therefore concluded to advise the President to ratify the treaty except the 2^d & 3 article, and with two proviso's — one that it shall not operate against any treaty heretofore made, and the other that it shall be limited in its duration to a Certain Number [2] of years; but the time has not been fixed. Two are proposed.⁵ What could induce them to reject the 2^d Article I know not, unless it was intended as a Set off for the 3^d. It appears from these proceedings that the Senate are will[ing] to relinquish all the claims of the Citizens of the U. S. ag^t. the French Republic, for Spoliations committed on Our Commerce, for the sake of a few national french Ships, and in order to get rid of the treaties of 1778 & 1788—I consider the US. will be the loser, & not France, by these articles not being agreed to. At the same time there is no knowing how the Premier Consul will act on the Occasion.

The Senate by these means having cut off all hopes of our Merchants from a reimbursement from the French Republic for the Spoliations committed by these Ships of War & privateers — They can look no where for redress than to their own Government, what their chance will be there is uncertain, tho' as the Eastern & middle States have sufferd most, the claims would be strongly supported.

John Jay has been appointed Chief Justice of the U. S. in the place of Ellsworth, resigned, & Samuel Dexter—Secretary of the Treasury, in the Room of [Oliver] Wolcott [3] No person is named to Succeed M^r Dexter in the War Department.⁶

The Anglo-federalists will try all in their power to prevent the election of M^r. Jefferson, they say they prefer M^r. Burr, but they dont speak truth, it is their wish if they Can to prevent either of those gentlemen from being President, & to provide by law, that in case of NO election taking place the Chief-Justice shall administer the government, untill a new election takes place, and it is for this purpose that the Essex Junto have persuaded M^r. Adams to nominate M^r. Jay — But I am certain that he knew not their schemes, when he made the nomination, and that in fact he was pursuing measures dictated or advised by A Hamilton his most bitter enemy. I hope & Trust in God that we

⁵ The Senate first rejected the Convention of 1800, but on February 3, 1801, accepted it with reservations which were later accepted by France. Ruhl J. Bartlett, *The Record of American Diplomacy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf [Third Edition], 1960), 102; Spaight to Blount, January 24, 1801, in this volume.

⁶ Roger Griswold of Connecticut served briefly. Hofstadter, *American Republic*, I, 697.

shall defeat all their diabolical Schemes, & that by their attempt, they will only consign themselves to eternal infamy here, & Damnation in the World to Come. Please present my Comp^{ts} to M^{rs} Blount dont be so lazy but write me now & then.

I am your Sincere friend
Rich^d. Dobbs Spaight

Jn^o. G. Blount

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.

Washington

Free

N^o. . Carolina

Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount

Washington City 24th Jan^y. 1801

Dear Sir,

Yesterday the Senate rejected the Treaty with france 16 for ratifying it & 14 against, but the Constitutional majority in this case being two thirds, it was lost. The House of Representatives yesterday, past a resolve directing a Committee to bring in a bill to continue in force the Sedition law, it was 48 & 48 the Speaker in the affirmative. They however wont be able to Carry the bill thru' as we have five absent & they have but one, and four of ours will be here to night. there are three vacancies in the H. of Representatives.

The Anglo-feds are determined to die hard, and to do all the mischief the[y] can before they expire, like lucifer they are mischievious in their fall & Like him I hope they fall never to rise again.

adieu

R. D. Spaight

Free

Jn^o. Gray Blount Esq^r

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire

Washington

N^o. Carolina

Josiah Collins, Jr. to John Gray Blount

[January 25, 1801]

Dear Sir,

The very melancholy event that I gave you so much reason to apprehend has unhappily taken place — Your ever to be lamented Brother Jacob is no more — He discharged the great debt of Nature, and I trust in God! passed from time to a blessed eternity, about 20 minutes after 1 o'clock on thursday morning last; and on the next day his corpse was followed by a concourse of friends to it's earthly place of rest, and interred by the side of my departed Sister⁷ —

His surviving Widow⁸ is not to be consoled; her grief for her loss is unspeakable; and this morning she complains of indisposition — Unhappy Woman! She is exceedingly anxious for the coming of Mrs Harvey⁹ whose arrival is momentarily expected.

My unhappy father and myself most sincerely sympathize with you and all the Relatives of the departed in the most poignant affection

Yours
Josiah Collins Jun^r

Edenton 25th Jan^y 1801——

Addressed: Mr John Gray Blount
Washington

William Shannon to [John Gray Blount]

Philad^a 27 Jan^y. 1801.

D Sir/

This is my third since I received a line from you — I hope I have not given offence, if I have it is what I never intended.—My principal object in this is to inform you, that Doctor John Hall is no more, he died day before yesterday of a billious Cholic——He had lately returned from the Southward and it is said that he

⁷ Jacob's first wife, Nancy Collins. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxvii.

⁸ Susannah Harvey Blount. See Mary Blount to Susannah Harvey, September 26, 1796, in this volume.

⁹ Anne Blount Harvey, sister of John Gray Blount, who often went to assist bereaved or ill members of the family. Sharpe to John Gray Blount, February, 1801, in this volume; Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxx.

completed a negotiation of some kind for Gen^l Gunn,¹⁰ Wade Hampton & others for which he actually received thirteen thousand dollars in Cash. I should not have troubled you now, but I thought (perhaps) the information might be of some use—Please write me by first post, and [2] as often as you have leisure, I am always happy to hear from you, also joyfull in your prosperity—Make my respects to M^{rs} Blount family & all friends —The Civilities I received in and about Washington shall last while time endures. do not forget M^r Bonner

I am D Sir

Your real friend and
very Hb^e Servant
W^m. . Shannon

Sharpe Blount to John Gray Blount

[February, 1801]

Blount Hall 2.O.Clock Saturday

Dear Sir

Lewis arrived here from Tarboro. a few minutes ago with his Letters saying that Jacob Blount was dangerously ill—Sister Harvy has gone through Greneville to Randolph Johnstons to night and goes to Tarbo°. & on to Edenton the nerest way through Bertie—I got home Last night from Warren County and go to that place on Monday week next—to attend M^{rs}. Littles Business there,¹¹ so far as Respects the———* of Genl Person, Should you ———* from Edenton in time for me to see you before Monday week, should be glad to see you, therefore be pleased to infrom me, that I may come & see you, Yours as usual &c, We are all tolerable well—

Sharpe Blount

Addressed: M^r John G. Blount
Washington

by
Lewis

¹⁰ General James Gunn (1753-1801) was a native Virginian who became a Georgia speculator and politician. He sat in the United States Senate from 1789 until 1801, but was deeply implicated in the Yazoo land frauds, retired in early 1801, and returned to Georgia, where he died. Foster, *Jackson, passim*; *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 983.

¹¹ See Thomas to John Gray Blount, November 29, 1800, n.220, in this volume.

* Manuscript torn.

John Gray Blount to Francis Harvey [copy]

[February 6, 1801]

Sir

You will please pay to Amos Johnston Jun^r. Esquire the amount you received for me of M^r. John Andrews after deducting the amount of Taxes due for the Land on the White Marsh—— formerly Gibbs's and his receipt will be good——

Yours &c. .

J. G. Blount

Washington

Feb^y. 6th 1801.

M^r. . Francis Harvey
late Sheriff of
Bladen

John Gray Blount to Thomas Brown [copy]

[February 6, 1801]

Maj^r. Gen^l. Thomas Brown

Sir

Will you be pleased to Settle with Amos. Johnston Jun^r. Esq^r. . for any Sum you may have in hand, on account of the Lands I lately owned on the White Marsh formerly _____* Gibbs and his receipt Shall be Sufficient at the Same time please except my Warmest thanks for your attention to my interest.

With much respect

Your Most Obed^t.

J. G. Blount

Washington
Feb^y. 6th 1801. }

* Illegible.

*John Strother to [John Gray Blount]*Morganton March 12th 1801 —

Dear Sir

By Mr Love I received your favor of the 28th of November, was happy to hear that my friends in Washington and its Vicinity were well—

I did not set out to Georgia untill Last Month owing to several causes, particularly that of having got hurt by a fall so bad that I was not able to write for several weeks; and yet feel the effects of it—When in Georgia I wrote you from Washington,¹² The particulars of my prospects, but for fear that Letter may not come to hand — I will here give the outlines of the result of my second tour to that country — When I arrived at Maj^r. Longs he informed me that Mr Grist had not taken up his Note I left in his hands but that he expect Mr. Grist to pay it by the first of May without fail — The lands in Jackson County on a resurvey are found, some of them to interfere with older Titles, they of course will be lost that are thus Situated, say upwards of 1000 Acres — The Balance I expect will be obtained in that County — after a Law Suit which must first [2] be had, before sales can be made on any eligible terms. I did offer to sell the whole at a low price situated as they are, but could find no purchasers, on risks — a gentleman in Jackson has agreed to attend to the business for one fourth of what may be gained on a final decision, and conditions to pay one half of all cost & charges gain or loss[.] I have met him on this proposition, and have concluded to try the Issue of the business in the Superior court of that County, well knowing his interest and connections to be such as to carry any point[.] there is a bare probability of effecting, reserving to myself the right of an appeal to the Federal court if I may Judge it advisable — I have but Little doubts, but the Sales will be set aside if such a thing can be effected at all —

B[ryan] Ward has produced charges against George Ogg to more than the Amount of the Notes I hold for you on him,¹³ some

¹² A town in Wilkes County in eastern Georgia.

¹³ Bryan Ward, an Indian trader and merchant of Georgia, bought the goods with which William Blount had unsuccessfully tried to buy land for North Carolina from the Indians at the Treaty of Hopewell in 1785. William had entered into complex commercial arrangements in order to repay the State for the goods, and George Ogg, then a member of a North Carolina mercantile firm, purchased part of the goods through Ward. The conclusion of the original transactions found William Blount in debt to the State for almost £1500, part of which was due him from Ward and Ogg. See also Blount to Bryan Ward, May 15, 1801, in this volume; Clark, *State Records*, XVII, 582; XVIII, 464, 512, 525, 555, 768; XX, 404-406, 701, 719; XXI, 1059; XXII, 801-802; Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 450-451, 637-639.

of the charges wanted the proper Vouchers to substantiate them — It appears from a Letter he has from the Late Gov^r. Blount, that he had sent forward his Acc^t to him Amounting to £786.9. and that Gov^r. Blount was willing to give him a Credit for that Sum provided [3] he would send forward the Vouchers from George Ogg for the same — I have a copy of his Acc^t exhibited to me with remarks on his Vouchers, — he appears to think that he has not paid up the Whole Amount of his Notes to George Ogg, but thinks he cannot be 100£ behind for which he is willing to give Land, but not being fully Satisfyed with his Account I have made no kind of Settlement with him untill after I see you which I hope will be the first Week in May, which nothing will prevent except death or Sickness—

A Merchant of this place sets out for Philadelphia, New York, & Boston tomorrow, he has some small Tracts of Land culled out of the Speculation in This county am^t about 25000 Acres—he informs me that he has some prospect of sales for Lands of such description — I have Verbally authorized him to conditionally engage two hundred Small Tracts in Buncombe county for, from 25. to 50 cents per Acre, the Tracts to contain from one to 500 Acres in a body — to be well Marked and designated. I shall have a further conversation with him on the Subject [4] this evening, but will not enter into any Obligation or Articles respecting the business, unless I could have had council with you previous thereto, a thing at present impossible—I know that number of Tracts can be picked out well worth the price Spoken for and whether it becomes an object of attention with you must be determined on when we meet, however I think at present it is not amiss to endeavor to gain information if possible of what might be done in case the thing is practicable—

Please present my compliments to M^{rs}. . Blount and family — to Gen^l Blount ¹⁴ & his Lady, and such [of] my friends as I esteem select ones, and let me assure you that with much esteem & respect I am your

Most Ob^t H^{ble} Servant
John Strother

¹⁴ In 1800 Reading Blount was elected Major General of the First North Carolina Infantry Division. Thomas to John Gray Blount, December 15, 1800, in this volume.

N.B. the late law¹⁵ (if I may call it a law) I will pay particular Attention to, and at least put it as little in the hands of some characters to injure the Interest of the buncombe Land as possible—

John Carson to John Gray Blount

[April, 1801?]

S^r

When M^r Strother Communicates to you What I have informed him I hope to receive a Line from you by way of instruction, and as to get any more Land then What has here to fore been Survey^d I think it impossable as it is not in the limits of the County¹⁶ therefore the 200:000 that is stated you Will put up With. And— if there is no more got there Will be no more to pay for[.] M^r Strother has rec^d your Deed, and is going forward to Communi- cate all the pleasing passages he has gon[e] threw sens [arriv- ing] on our frunteer

I am your frend
John Carson

John G Blount—

Addressed: John: G: Blount
Washington

Attention
M^r. . Strother }

D. W. Mitchell to Stephen Blount¹⁷

2^d. May 1801.

Sir,

Some years ago a Note of hand for £66-6-0 was placed in my hand by Major Pendleton Now of New York for recovery — On the 4th. November 1791 I brought Suit on the Note and got Judg-

¹⁵ In early 1801, the North Carolina General Assembly passed a land law dealing with time limits for bringing entries to grants, and for use of land without ownership. *Laws of North Carolina* [1801], 1-3.

¹⁶ Probably Buncombe County, where the bulk of Blount's western North Carolina speculation centered.

¹⁷ See Nathaniel Pendleton to Blount, April 22, 1800, in this volume.

ment with Interest from 1st. June 1787 and Execution has been regularly kept up while I remained at the bar — The Note was given by Cap William J. Davies, and Sued in the name of William Blount indorsee.

I am Sir
your Very H^{ble} Serv^t.
D. W. Mitchell

Cap: Blount
Addressed: Captain Stephen Blount
Savannah

John Gray Blount to Bryan Ward

Washington May 15th. 1801.

Mr. Ward

My Attorney Mr Strother has informed me that you have expressed to him a readiness to settle honorably the claim of William Blount against you, which I am much pleased to hear, as that Debt is now my property having paid the Amount of the same to the state of North Carolina who would not take the Bonds & discharge my Brother.¹⁸

I have handed Mr. Strother a full statement of the whole account which will I hope enable you & him to settle the matter with Justice to both and I trust you will do; otherwise Mr Strother has my directions to take measures which will be disagreeable to me & injurious to you

I am
Your most Obed^t
J. G. Blount

Addressed: Mr. Bryan Ward
Georgia

¹⁸ See John Strother to Blount, March 12, 1801, in this volume. The State was unwilling to take Ward's bonds in payment of William Blount's debt, as it considered William's sale of the goods unauthorized and thus found him personally responsible for repayment.

*John Strother to [John Gray Blount]*Raleigh May 26th. 1801—

Sir

Inclosed is the Secretary's answer to your Mem^o to me — as also the courses of one of the Tracts of Land you wanted, and his observations on the Other —

I leave this place tomorrow for Hillsboro: from which place you will hear from me again —

Please present my compliments [to] M^{rs} Blount & family—

I am with respect

Y^r. Most Ob^t Serv^t —

John Strother

*John Strother to [John Gray Blount]*At Cap^t Christmas's¹⁹ Orange City²⁰ —June 1st 1801—

Sir

I see M^r Stroud a few days past at Hillsboro: he informed me that [William?] Lytle had property that might be come at in this County, that he would write to you on the Subject or go down and see you, in Either case he will accede to the proposals you made him while at your house — I have Left instructions with Cap^t Christmas that should you write him on the Subject of the Land in this county, to comply with your request in any disposition it may be convenient for you to make respecting that Land; I leave with him M^r Cauleys Deed to me, to be recorded—with instructions to let it be known that it is for sale. The old gentleman I formerly Mentioned to you, as at this place who wished to manufacture the oil Stones²¹ has repeated that wish to me a few days ago, and seems anctious to engage in it next fall, I have

¹⁹ Thomas Christmas (c. 1743-1810), a longtime resident of Warren County. *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, September 6, 1810.

²⁰ In Orange County. Bradley, "North & South Carolina," in W. M. Bradley and Brother, *Bradley's Atlas of the World* (Boston: M. Garrison and Company, [1885]).

²¹ Whetstones for sharpening tools.

promised to answer him at that time—I set out tomorrow for Buncombe — please present my compliments to M^{rs} Blount & family — I am with respect your

M^o O^{bt} Hble Serv^t John Strother

John Strother to [John Gray Blount]

Morganton June 8th. . 1801

Sir

I arrived here yesterday evening and met with Mr. Walton, who tells me that he could make no Saveing contract respecting Buncombe Lands, owing princepally, he thinks to the great Scarcity of Cash, of course the object of selling in that quarter for a time is lost — I shall this summer Select all the Land within the bounds of that reserved,²² that I think worth saveing the balance may or may not be kept as circumstances may turn up.

Be so good as to let me hear from you as often as convenient, & please say occationally what pork may probably be worth Next Winter, — There is at this time in this District a Number of Beef purch [2]asers, which I hope will circulate som[e]* Cash among us — from my Informati[on]* I expect all the Cattle in Buncombe [that]* is fit for Beef, will be purchased u[p this]* Summer, of course some Cash Mu[st b]e* Left, & I hope to pick up a Little of [it]* —

Please reiterate my former assur[ances]* of respect to M^{rs}. Blount & family, [to the]* Gen^l & Lady — & believe me with resp[ects]*

Your Most Ob^t H^{ble}

[Servant]*

John Strother

²² See Strother to Blount, November 27, 1800, in this volume.

* Manuscript obscured by repair.

*John Strother to John Gray Blount*Asheville August 16th. . 1801.

Dear Sir

This day I returned from a tour in the rich Mountains,²³ where I went with an expectation of finding the Warm Spring I mentioned to you,—but was not successful—I am still in high Spirits about it, and have sent a man to the nation for an Indian who it is said can shew it—

on my arrival at this place I received your much esteemed favors of the 12th. . of June and 1st of July, I wish I had received the former previous to my seeing Mr. Dillon, with whom I have settled for R[ichard]. B[lackledge's]. receipts—I had to give Dillon a number of Small tracts of Land on the Waters of Ivy river²⁴ — (tho none were of the best I had surveyed) to amount of 10700 Acres—In settling of this business I had nothing to govern me with respect to the price of the land Sent R.B. by S[tockley] D[onaldson] but R.B.'s acknowledgement of the price he received which amounted to upwards of three Thousand Dollars—I have R.B.'s papers he gave S.D. and Mr. Dillons acknowledgement of full satisfaction therefor—

I have since my arrival from the Eastward discovered that there is a number [2] of special Enterys made by sundry persons in Rutherford, on the West side of P[igeon]. River—after the ratification of the Treaty, and previous to Buncombe being established as a County. these Enteries have never been patented, and are laying back till after a desition on the old claims is had, and should they then come in, they will leave but little Land worth contending for—Col^o. Avery²⁵ and myself have come to the agreement mentioned in your Letter of the 12th June and will have it submitted to the Court of conferance²⁶ for a desition but I feel much less interested in the event, than I did before I found out the Entery's above aluded to—

I am allways projecting some thing New and now have a New subject to go on, for your approbation & opinion—On one of the

²³ Rich Mountain, just south of Hot Springs (earlier known as Warm Springs). Robinson, *North Carolina*, 592.

²⁴ The Ivy River is a tributary of the French Broad. Its source is north of the French Broad in Madison County. W. C. Kerr, "Physiographical Map of North Carolina," in Polk, *Handbook of North Carolina*.

²⁵ Waightstill Avery, a native of Connecticut and graduate of Princeton, was active in the Revolution and in State politics thereafter. He was the State's first Attorney General and lived in Jones County before moving to Burke, which he often represented in the General Assembly. He died in 1821. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 56.

²⁶ Established in 1801, the Court of Conference was the forerunner of the North Carolina Supreme Court of 1818. Iefler and Newsome, *North Carolina*, 293. For this suit see John Strother to Blount, September 5, 1802, in this volume.

Please present my compliments to M^{rs}. Blount and family to Gen^l. [Reading] Blount & Ladey, to W. Orr and R.B.—

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington
North Carolina

Mail

*John Strother to John Gray Blount*Asheville Oct^r. 23^d. 1801—

Dear Sir

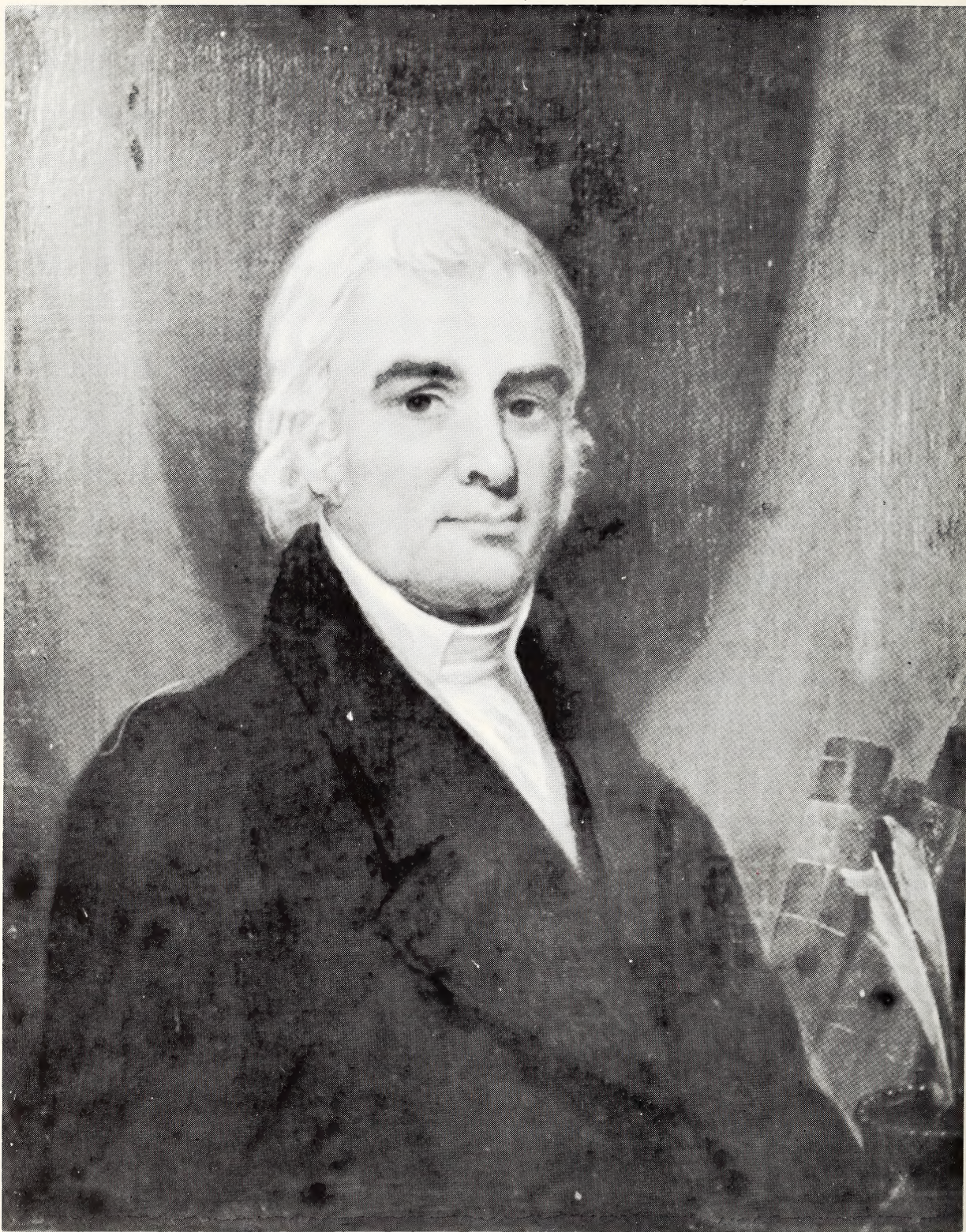
I wrote you from Morganton superior court, informing you that I had commenced the suit contemplated on between Col^o [Waightstill] Avery and myself, and inclosed you a Statement of it—I also wrote you from this place after my return from Morganton; not having received an acknowledgment of the receipt of them Letters by our last Fridays Mail makes me doubtfull whether or not they arrived safe to hand — I mentioned in my letter from Morganton that if my attendance at Raleigh on the 10th of December at the court of conferance could be dispensed with that it would be quite agreeable to me, as also to my situation, as not having collected as much Cash this summer as would pay the Taxes of the Lands in this county of course was obliged to borrow with a promise of refunding by Christmas and the fall and Winter being the best time to collect money in this quarter I think it adviseable to attend here at them seasons — an other reason might be given — that is — the weads, Vines, thissels and briers, are [2] so bad in the mountains in the Summer season, that but little surveying can be done out of the Settlements till the leaves fall and the weads are killed—

There is a prospect of the rich coves in the mountains coming in demand if Hemp should continue to command a respectable price — and I hope that the present disposition of the people to cultivate that article will make it the Staple of the Country, should this be the case the rich mountains will become respectable in a few years.

I made an attempt to survey the Lands on the waters of big Laurel²⁷ but could make no progress in consequence of the reasons given

I shall wait at this place till Next mail which will arrive on friday Next and should I receive no Letters from you at that time will by some means raise as much money as will take me to Georgia on the subject of the business there — I received a Letter from Col^o. Harris by the last mail proposing to purchase the Georgia Land at a discount adiquat to his risque & expence of sueing for them, but he named no sum — it is uncertain whether

²⁷ A branch of the French Broad River. The Big Laurel runs east-northeast from the French Broad close to the Tennessee boundary and in mountainous country. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, map opposite 64.



John Haywood (1755-1827), of Edgecombe County, State Treasurer from 1787 to 1827. Photograph from the files of the State Department of Archives and History.

I'll return from Georgia to this place or to Raleigh to attend Avery's [3] suit at the court of conference, to which place my former Letters notified you it was referred—this movement will depend on the Letters I hope to receive from you next friday — I depend much on Mr Harris' attention in the suit with Avery, and if you think it advisable, Mr. [John] Haywood also —

I wrote to Col^o. [William] Polk on the Subject of the mode I must persue to pay the direct Tax on that part of your Land I hold in this County but have received no answer. I wish you to pay some attention to that business and instruct me how to proceed—

I have been for a few weeks past much afflicted with the Rhumatic pains but have got better—

Pray inform me what Price is [doing?] and, where he is,

I have not received a line, or heard from Mr. W[illie]. B[lount] for some time past —

Please present my compliments to Mrs Blount and family to the Gen^l. and his Lady and accept the assurance of the sincere regard of Sir

Your Most Ob^t H^{ble} Serv^t
John Strother

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington
North Carolina

Via Charlotte]

John Strother to [John Gray Blount]

Asheville Oct^r. 26th. . 1801—

Dear Sir

I wrote to you, a few days past and put the Letters in the hands of a Mr Wood for the purpose of having them put in the post office at Salem — but meeting with Mr Salter have got his promise to call on Mr Wood who he will see at Morganton, for the Letters I put in his hands — I hope he will get them — but should he fail — they only contain information of my wish not to

be obliged to attend the suit between Avery and myself at Raleigh in Dec^r. Next and some other things respecting the object of my business in this county — I will send to Mr. E. Harris a power of attorney to act fully for me in that business as tho I were personally present[.] it may be that some other facts would be necessary to make up with Col^o. Avery — Mr. Harris will have the power of agreeing to them if found expedient—

With a hope that Mr Salter will get the other Letters from Mr. Wood I conclude with sentiments of perfect respect from

Y^r. H^{ble} Serv^t
John Strother

Peter Casso [Jr]²⁸ to John Gray Blount

Shell Castle Nov^r 4th 1801

Dear Sir

Your Goodness, towards Me, has Subjected you, to a great deal of troubles, and you Still Encouraging it, has Made me again Bold, to Beg further favour, which I Beg you will Do Now, as you have Done for the Past, Excuse The Liberty: his Excellency, Governor Wallace,²⁹ has Been Kind Enough, to Spare me two Barrels of fishe, (Say Mullets) which I am anxious My wife, Could get, for During the Session; Will you Suffer Me, to Beg the favour of you to Receive them and have forwarded, if opportunity offers:

May this find you and your Respectable famely, well; The governor and all his are some indisposed with Cold, Particularly Mr^s. Wallace, MySelf Much Better, altho Not yet well; My Vessel is Nearly loaded, I hope by Next-following Sunday, to be Ready to Go out;

The house goes on well, I am Sorry The Governor, has Not Succeeded in his West[?], Speculation, as he Expected; Nothing

²⁸ Possibly the son of Peter Casso the innkeeper at Raleigh. The younger Casso apparently worked as a supercargo for the Blounts. Casso to Blount, January 8, 1802, in this volume.

²⁹ A nickname for John Wallace, the storekeeper at Shell Castle. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 97, n.152.

farther, worthy, to trouble you; Present, I Pray, My humble
Respects, to M^{rs}. Blount & famely, and Believe that I Remain
with the Same,
Sincere Esteem & Respects

Dear Sir

Your Very humble
friend and Servant
P. Casso

John G. Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r.

Merchant

Washington

N^o Carolina

LETTERS FOR 1802

Peter Conway¹ to John Gray Blount

Philadelphia January 2^d. 1802

Sir)

I rece^d. your letter of the 1^s.t. of August, acknowleging the
rect. of two hundred dollars wherin you inform me, Shall be
applied to paying the Taxes of, Dr. Halls Lands, in Hyde & Beau-
fort, & the Receipts Sent on. would you be So obleging to Send
them on as Soon as possible. I thank you for the information ab^t.
the Land in Tyrel—however I believe Dr. Hall prety well dis-
posed of that, before he Died. I have great hopes now there is
Peace.² Lands will have a run. When Titles are clear if a Dutch
company, could be formed in Holland. I think the North caro-
lina Swamp would come in play. The Doct^{rs}. Lands [2] will have
to be Sold, of course, I must look out for the best chance. Should
any thing turn up I certainly will inform you.

I am your most

Ob^t. & very Hb.

Ser^t. P. Conway

Addressed: John G. Blount Esquire

Washington

North Carolina

¹ Conway has not been fully identified. He was apparently the executor of Hall's estate. Conway to Blount, July 12, 1802, in this volume.

² Preliminary articles of peace between Britain and France had been signed in London on October 1, 1801, and were soon confirmed by the Peace of Amiens, signed on March 27, 1802. Henry Eldridge Bourne, *The Revolutionary Period in Europe (1763-1815)* (New York: The Century Co., 1914), 265-266; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 578.

*Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount*New Bern 8th. Jan^y. 1802

Dear Sir,

I wrote to you 8 or 10 days ago requesting you to give me some information respecting some lands in Hyde, in regard to their value &c. but have not had the pleasure of hearing from you since——

Some days ago I was in Company with Capt. James Taylor, and enquiring of him, what instructions he had rec^d. from Dearborn³ respecting the compleating the fort on Beacon Island; he informed me that Idea was abandoned by the Sec^{ty}. of War as he had rec^d a letter from Timmons the accountant in the War Department to call on you for the monies advanced on the Contract for Shells as they would not be wanted.

I have always looked on a *refund* as a bad *fund* but in the present case I am of Opinion that they have no right to demand it—from the nature of the Contract, (which Taylor explained to me) if they had proceeded to build & finish the fort, and it did not require shells to the amount of what they had actually paid for, then the Surplus money was to be returned and if they wanted more shells to compleat the fort &c. the[y] were by Contract to have [2] them on the same terms—Now it appears to me as they have not proceeded on with the fortifications they have no right to demand the money back the Shells are always ready for them I presume & if they dont choose to take them the fault is theirs & not yours——Suppose for Example M^r D. or M^r M. should engage & pay me for 500 bbls Corn at 3 dollars to be delivered in a Vessel at any time within 3 Months, and in the writings should especially Contract that if the Vessel carried more, that they should have the Surplus at the same price, & if she could not Carry so much, what she could not Carry, I was to repay back the money for. after the Contract Corn fell here & in the West Indies so that the Speculation would be a bad one, & M^r D or M^r M. never sends his Vessel to receive the Corn—Can He demand the money, or any part of it from me? I say not & tell them there is the Corn ready for them—You can surely tell the U. S. that the Shells are always ready for them—I told Taylor my opinion & I believe he thinks as I do — I understand from

³ Henry Dearborn, Secretary of War from 1801 to 1809. *Dictionary of American Biography*, V, 175. For Taylor and the contract see Spaight to Blount, November 6, December 22, 1800, in this letter.

him that he would only give you notice of the Demand but proceed no farther untill he should receive further Orders——

[3] Shall we have the pleasure to see you here during the Superior Court? M^{rs} Spaight Joins me in compliments to M^{rs}. Blount. I am with Esteem

Yours sincerely

Rich^d. Dobbs Spaight

John G. Blount, Esqr.

Free

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr.
Washington
N. C.

Peter Casso [Jr.,] to John Gray Blount

Charleston (S. C. .) January 8th. . 1802

Dear Sir.

Suffer Me to acquaint you of Our Safe Arrival, at this Place, the 4th. . inst. ., after a Passage of thirteen days, without any accident, thro^{gh} the good conduct of our Captⁿ. and Providence, Thanks be to all:

I am well, at The Exce^{ption}, of My old Complaint, May this find you and your Respectable famely, in a Perfect State of good Health is My Sincere and Earnest Desire, be Pleased to Present them My Humble and greatfull Respects:

The country I have Left, (Port. R.)⁴ is in Such Situation that I cannot Described to you, Neither do I think, that there is Many Persons Can Well [describe]; Business is Dull, Nobody Purchase, but from Hand to Mouth, Nor Building, Peace you know, is Made, in Europe; troops have Sailed, from France for St. Domingo — and how they will be Received By Toussaint, But few, if any, Can tell, he is Recruiting fast all over the Island, for What Purpose, Nobody can find it out;⁵ Many of the White Inhabitants,

⁴ Possibly Puerto Rico (since he refers to a "country") or equally possibly Puerto Real, a harbor on the north coast of Haiti, now known as Bay of Caracol. Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 719.

⁵ Toussaint L'Ouverture ruled all of Hispaniola essentially independently of France during 1801 and 1802. Following the Peace of Amiens in 1802, Napoleon dispatched a huge army to Hispaniola to suppress the Negro leader, who was gathering troops to resist this invasion. German Arciniegas, *Caribbean: Sea of the New World*, translated by Harriet de Onis (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), 326-345, hereinafter cited as Arciniegas, *Caribbean*; Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 580.

are Very anxious, to come away, But They Cannot get Pasports Neither Can They Collect their Due.

The Peace has Stacknated Business here So Much, That, Not Much is Doing, Considering the Place, and I Cannot Sell My Small Cargo,——(Consisting of 12.H^{hd} & 11 Bbls of Sugar, 1H^{hd}. of Rum 9 Bags of Coffee and a few oranges, Even They will Not Sell) [.] fortunatly for me, [2] That I have as Much freight, as will pay The Ba^{le}. of the Charter, I Mean to Shipped, for Willmington (NC) where, I am agoing (So to get home, the quicker, as I am Very Uneasy about my famely fate,) and Indeivour between there and home to Do the Best I can with it;

You will Please to Receive fr. The Schooner Charlotte Cap^t. Henry Ellison, fou^r. Bottles Cordial, (I Believe good,) and four Pots of Sweat Meat, The Best I could get after applying at Three Different Places for it:

at Port R, I could Not Dispose of The Varnish, Nor yet, here, have I find any offer;

Nothing More worthy to communicate; May God Preserve you, Unhurt, is The Sincere wishes of whom, Beg you will Believe him to Remain, with great Esteem and Respect;

Dear Sir

Your Very humble
friend and Servant
P. Casso

John G. Blount Esq^r..

P.. S.. I Beg you will acquaint Miss Henrietta I have Send her Some Kisses.. and a Pretty Boxe, Delivered to her, and Please to tell her, if it Brakes, She May Eat the Pieces, as above P. C. Kisses are Sort of a Sugar Candy.

Alexander Miller⁶ to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

Edenton 10 Jan^y 1802

Sir,

Enclosed is a list of articles shipt on board The Sloop Nancy, Cap^t. Hathaway bound for your Town, belonging to M^{rs} Blount⁷

⁶ A merchant and shipper of Edenton. Miller to Blount, July 4, 1803, in John Gray Blount Papers; *Second Census: 1800*, Chowan County.

⁷ Mrs. Susannah Harvey Blount, widow of Jacob Blount, known as Sukey. She was returning to Washington from Edenton after Jacob's death. Willie to John Gray Blount, June 21, 1803, in John Gray Blount Papers.

which she request you will please receive should they arrive before her—The Negroes will be sent over to Plymouth tomorrow to be sent on to Washington by Mr. . Armistead, it will be necessary that——* plan should be provided, against their arrival for them — M^{rs} Blount will be on in a few days, I am Sir respectfully

your obt Sv^{nt}.
Alex^r Miller

[enclosure]

Account of Sundries deliver'd on board the Sloop Nancy commanded by Pressly Hathaway, and bound for Washington, N. C., to be delivered to M^{rs}. . Sukey Blount; in her absence to John Gray Blount Esqr.

1 doz & 9 Black Walnut & Mahogany Chairs.	1 pair andirons.
1 Bed Cover'd with a Blanket.	1 Sett Curtain Rods.
1 Bed covered with a Carpet.	2 Pott Trammells [fireplace cranes] & 1 Spit.
	1 Griddle, 1 Hoe and 1 Chopping Knife.
1 Bed & Dressing Glass covered with a Blanket.	3 Potts & 2 pair Pott Hooks
1 Chest Draws	1 Frying Pan
1 Pine Chest	1 dripping Pan. 1 sauce Pan.
1 Bag with a saddle.	1 Chaffing Dish, 1 Bread Toaster.
1 Bag.	
	1 p ^r Waffle Irons.
1 ditto	1 p ^r . . Tongs & Shovel.
1 Mahogany Knife Case.	2 pair Flatt Irons & Stand.
1 Candle Box with Knives & Forks.	
1 Tea Board & 3 waiters	1 Iron Ladle.
1 Bunch Peacock Feathers	2 Square Chimney bars.
	1 cooling Tub, 1 roling Pin & 5 Trays.
1 p ^r Scales & weights	4 Tubs. 2 Piggins [wooden pails]. 1 Keeler [shallow tub].
1 pad Lock.	1 coffee Pott. 2 Pewter Dishes.
1 Truckel Bed Stead & Sacking Bottom.	1 (Box Candles.)
	1 candle-Mould Stand.

* Manuscript torn.

- 1 Sacking Bottom 1 form & Butter Churn. 1 Tea
Kettle, 1 Iron Skillet.
- 1 four post Mahogany Bed Stead, 1 Jug. 1 meat Sifter.
head Board & teaster—2 barrels Soap.
- 1 do. . . do. Black Walnut do. . . 3 1/2 barrels Corn, in the year.
do. . do. . do. 1 Horse Cart.
- 3 Dining & 1 Breakfast Maho-10 Fowls. 6 Ducks. and.
gany Tables, in cases, A parcel of Trumpery belonging
1 Guitar & case. to the Negroes.
- 1 Pine Box; 1 Basket, & 1 Band
Box.
- 2 Stone Jarrs 1 Jug.
1 pair Bellows.
1 Glisten Pipe & Stool.
2 pair Tongs & Shovel.
2 pair andirons.
1 Milk Picken & Gourd.
2 Chamber Potts.
1 Jarr Pickles.
1 Jarr Salt.
1 Fender.
1 Portmanteau Trunk.
1 Carpet.
1 Hair Trunk.
1 Leather Trunk.
1 Sacking Bottom.
4 barrels, 1 half barrel, & 1 flour
Tub of China.—
1 hair Trunk. 1 Leather Trunk.
1 Bundle Bedding.
2 Casks with vinegar.
1 cask with Rum
1 Firkin with Hog's Lard.
1 Teaster.
1 Box Strawberry Wines & Blue
Plumb Scions [grafting
shoots].
1 Wheel.—

Edenton 8th. . January 1802—Will Carter Jun^r. . pro Josiah

Free Collins

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Washington

*Thomas Russell^s to John Gray Blount*Port antoney [Jamaica] February 1st 1802 —

Dear friend —

I with pleasure Inform you of my Arvell in the West — Indes Say Jamaica wher I find the Markets to be bad [.] I Arove here on Saterday 30th of Janeary after a passage of 22 Days [.] I left the bar the 9th. and @ 10p^m Hove too the wind @ SSW — blowing hard . that Night Ship^d two heavy Sees [.] Stove my boat and lost the Most part of My Stock the Next Day in the Morning the wind Still increasing lost the Remainder of my Stock [.] I Being in the Gilf the See was Desper ——* by the wind Hauling to NNW — the See was Very Cross [.] I have had No offer for any thing as yett and am going Down to Leward as Soon as the wind will promit to git out as the North is hard, their Severall Sail of Mericans Lying here and has Been a Long tim [.] times is Dull, at present and I cannot Inform You the price Currants to any truth [.] pleas put my Letter in the post office and inform the John Wallace [s?] by the first oppertunity if You pleas—

So no more at present but Remain Yours To Serve—

Tho^s. . Russell

return'd from Washington

Addressed: John G: Blount Esq^r

Marchant in

Washington

Suppose

N: Carolina

p^r favour by Cap^t ShanksCap^t Eagels

^s A ship captain who often sailed for the Blounts. Blount to Russell, September 22, 1797, in Letter Book.

* Illegible.

Nathaniel Macon⁹ to Mr. Blount

Washington [D. C.] 2 Feb^r 1802

Sir

Your letter of the 18-ultimo was this day received, The papers therein mentioned have been transmitted by the Governor to the Senators and Representatives. The petition¹⁰ has been presented to the House of Representatives, and referred to a select Committee

The subject of the Western lands is undoubtedly of much importance to the claimants, and will certainly receive the utmost attention from the Representatives of North Carolina, But whether more can be effected than heretofore, is considered doubtfull indeed; The President will be requested I expect [2] to lay before the House, any information he may possess as to the cause of the failure of the treaty last year,

Your idea of funding has heretofore been considered, perhaps when your brother was in Congress, and as well as I recollect brought either before the Committee of the Whole House or the house itself, but without effect,

The last time I saw you, you told me that you had done with politics, and as I do not write much about them, it would scarcely be expected to say any thing to one done with them, However I feel an inclination, to give you a short statement of what may be expected, and in gratifying this inclination I hope not to tire you

It is expected the late Judiciary [Act] will be repealed, that the internal taxes will be [3] repealed, that the army will be reduced, that the expense in the navy will be less than heretofore while at the same time the trade will be protected against the Tripolitans, and that an effectual provision will be made for the final payment of the national debt, as fast as it can be done, with the terms of the contracts,¹¹

I am with much respect

Sir

y^r most ob^t Ser^t

Nath^l Macon

⁹ The well known Jeffersonian leader in the House of Representatives from 1791 to 1815 and Speaker from 1801 to 1807. He served in the Senate, 1815-1828. *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1250-1251.

¹⁰ The petition was for reimbursement for lands ceded to the Indians. See Will Polk to Blount, January 6, 1801; and David Stone to Blount, February 10, May 4, 1802, in this volume.

¹¹ This is an accurate summary of the first Jefferson administration's legislative objectives. See Hofstadter, *American Republic*, I, 291-327.

Jacob Swindell¹² to John Gray Blount

[February 2, 1802]

Sir these comes with my complements to you to inform you that Mr. Ira Hollowel and Mr Willim thornoton was at my house a fue days past and Com on ho[r]se back on the new Road and I did at that time expect to Com up to See you but it So havend that I could not and Mr. Hollowel had not a Chance to Right [.] he desiered that I would inform that he wishes you to Com and See the Road your Self for he wants to See you very much also I wish you to Com down my Self in order Settlet the Line btwn your Self and Jordan [.] I do Sopoase that I have found Jordan and Ehrens ['] beginning and I wish to know where yourn Lise that Joins me for I want to bil [*i.e.*, build?] and Cannot till the Land is Run [.] also my brother wants to Joine me and purchas of you and want to move this Spring if you will Com and Lay of the Land in time and Severl others wishes to purchis Land of you and Som wishes to Leace if you will Com and See where your Land is

I cannot inform you as Id wish in Every peticlur But Com down for god Sake and for your own profit if Convenat

So ——* Yours to Serve
Jacob Swindell

febry 2nd day 1802

Addressed: Joⁿ G Blount
Washington
by favour of Martain Shut

*William Shannon to [John Gray Blount]*Philad^a. Feb^y. 4. 1802

My dear Sir./

This instant I received yours dated 18th Jan^y. last. by this I perceive that you have not got my last to you of the 4 Jan^y ulto. This together with planes & wool Hats for yourself, & a few

¹² Of Hyde County. A Blount agent and supervisor, he with Hollowell was apparently engaged in improving Blount's Hyde County land, particularly in building a road. Swindell to Blount, January 1, 1803; June 22, 1805, in John Gray Blount Papers.

Blounts. Cameron to Blount, October 6, 1803, in John Gray Blount Papers.

* Illegible.

articles for Baker¹³ was forwarded by a Cap^t Travis bound directly for your place, who must have sailed from here sometime before the 6th ult

I have no expectation of Juniper or Cedar Shingles falling in price, and look for a reduction in wages, which will be of no small consequence.—I am glad to hear that you do not think Baker will be very long a Burden to me. However I must confess frankly, that if he is not considerably in debt to some person in your place, he must have strained oeconomy beyond my expectations—I feel very sensibly for your unfortunate connection with David Allison & as soon as I can learn who the person is, will wait upon him—I could not discern clearly from your letter whether the name was Ball or Bell.— Since writing the above I have seen Mr Joseph Ball¹⁴ he is the person to whom you allude—I am pretty well acquainted with him & think him a liberal man — he has a large landed estate and but little money, has also suffered by the speculations—the substance of all he said to me was, that if he could be satisfied that the [2] installment would be paid in 2 — 4 or 6 months he would take no steps to enforce it — and I have no doubt in my mind that he would even extend it farther—In your next to me, please to say when you can with a moral certainty satisf[y]* him & all that can will be chearfully & promptly done—In the mean time I here every thing will remain in Statu quo.—

I am DSir

Your real friend & C^o——*

W^m. Shannon

David Stone to John Gray Blount

Washington [D. C.] 10th. Feby 1802

Dear Sir,

I can assure you it will give me great pleasure to be useful to yourself and other Claimants of Western Lands¹⁵ similarly situated. The business has been before Congres once already since I

¹³ Possibly Blake Baker, planning a mercantile venture. See Thomas to John Gray Blount, August 30, 1802, in this volume.

¹⁴ Blount had become indebted to Ball, who was pressing for his money. Willie to John Gray Blount, April 23, 1800, n.61, in this volume.

* Writing obscured by manuscript repair.

¹⁵ In obtaining recompense for lands ceded to Indians. See Will Polk to Blount, January 6, 1801; Nathaniel Macon to Blount, February 2, 1802; and David Stone to Blount, May 4, 1802, in this volume.

have been a Member and an appropriation made to extinguish the Indian Title. This plan I understand has failed the Subject is now again before the House of Representatives in consequence of the proceedings of our last Assembly. I cannot yet say what will be effected nor what course the business will take — But as a Senator from North Carolina I feel the honor of the State concerned as well as the interest of individuals and the justice due them that some adequate provision should be made for the satisfaction of those Claimants [2] as soon as the affair shall have put on such a shape as will enable me to conjecture the result I shall be happy to communicate it — The Terms you offer cannot certainly be complained of, as extravagant. The objects of Legislative reform bro't forward are to numerous and gentlemen take such different views of them that even here we are at a loss to say what will be adopted. The expensive Machinery for collecting the internal revenues will probably induce their repeal. It is thought that without them all the necessary expenses of Government may be met and an army according to the Report of the Secretary of War sufficiently large kept up — from 800,000 to 1,000,000 of Dollars given to the Navy and 7,300,000 Dollars [3] paid annually to the Debt.

I am with Respect & Esteem
Your obedient Servant
David Stone

Free *David Stone*

Addressed: John G. Blount Esquire
Washington
North Carolina

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarborough 15th Feb^y. 1802

D^r. Sir,

I could not possibly manage to pay Bythal Bell¹⁶ the \$100 which he pressed me for without using the notes you gave me to pay for the Cotton Gin; and by so doing I have brought myself

¹⁶ An old friend of considerable financial means who represented Edgecombe County in the House of Commons 1789-1791 and in the State Senate in 1800, and was later sheriff of the county. He died in November, 1802. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 146; Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 93; *Heads of Families*, 58; *Second Census: 1800*, Edgecombe County; *Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette*, November 30, 1802; Thomas to John Gray Blount, November 15, 1802, in this volume.

into an awkward situation; for the Gin has actually been delivered to Bell & Essex who at my request have paid for it & drawn on me for the amount, at sight, in favor of Mess^{rs}. Stuarts of this place. — when I used the notes I felt confident that I should be able to replace them the moment I could see Jordan Hill¹⁷ to whose House I was immediately going, as he yet owes to the Estate of Gerard upwards of \$200 & I had his solemn promise that he would settle & pay up by the 1st. day of the present month — but he completely disappointed me. he was not able to pay a Dollar—can you do any thing to relieve me?—and how shall we manage to pay Bell the other \$300 at our Court next week? I ask the last question because he has said that he must then be paid & I know not how to pay him, because I [2] neither have Cash nor can borrow it. I have for some days past thought seriously of going to Tennessee this spring in Company with Mr Sumner, who has determined to start in April, for the purpose of obtaining a decision of his father's military service Right between him & his sister & to adopt some method of rendering that property productive & secure. as such a Journey would probably conduce more to my health than any other, my present opinion is that I shall undertake it if I can raise Cash to defray my Expences — What think you of the project? Jackey is gone to Halifax & our Sister to Sharpe's; — So that I am quite alone. Remember me to your family—

I am

Yours &c. &c.

Tho. Blount

I Shall get your Gin

from Halifax as soon

as possible —

Free

Addressed: John Gray Blount, Esq^r.
Washington
mail.

¹⁷ A slaveholder of Franklin County. *Second Census: 1800, Franklin County.*

Thomas Blount to [John Gray Blount]

Tarborough 22^d. Febr. 1802

Dr. Sir,

Mr Schenck has lately been to Halifax & seen the cotton Gin I bought for you of Mr Stewart which he says is the most infamous piece of workmanship he ever Saw — and upon his Report of it I have requested Mr Ames to take it back & refund to Bell & Eppes the money he rec^d. for it. He states that in a small trial made of it by Mr Burt, with Mr Ames' permission, it gave way in almost every ——* — I Suppose you will be disappointed of getting a Machine from that quarter, & I apprehend the disappointment will be no misfortune for I have lately been told that [Eli] Whitney the patenter is Now in this State looking out for the owners of Machines & calling on them to pay \$5 P sale for the patent right, which they must pay, or, remain Subject to a penalty of \$1000 — Can you Send up any money for B[ythel]. Bell? this is the week in which he has said he will [2] be paid — I am Still alone — Jackey is at Halifax & our Sister at Blount Hall — remember me to your family —

Yours as usual
Tho. Blount

George Cameron¹⁸ to [John Gray Blount]

Wilmington N^o. . C^a. . Febr. 23rd. 1802

Mr. Jn^o. G Blount,

Sir,

I was Sick when your favour came to hand, and have been almost ever Since, the molasses arrived the next day after I rece^d. your letter, there, is Six hogheads of it Sold from 45/100^{cts} 50/100^{cts}—p gallon, there is eight hogsheads Shipped Round to Shell Castle, p^r Schooner Polly Capt. Burckley, I have inclosed the captains Bill lading to the governor I paid Capt Wallis the balance of the Sales of the Six hogsheads, which was ninety Seven Dollars, the Freight from the Havannah was ninety and the duties here was Sixty odd, but Capt Wallis got the account of

* Illegible.

¹⁸ A merchant of Wilmington who was an occasional correspondent and agent of the Blounts. Cameron to Blount, October 6, 1803, in John Gray Blount Papers.

Sales with the money, there was one hogshead Stove[in] after it was landed, by whose fault I know not, Capt Wallis can explain it to the owners as he was on the Spott

I am dear Sir
Y^r Most Obd^t Ser^t.
Geo Cameron

Jacob Rhodes to John Gray Blount

Elysium [Robeson County] Feb^y. 24th. 1802

Sir

Agreeable to promise I spoke to M^r. Powell to know if he would go to Washington & make the machenery of a Cotton Gin he informs me that is not in his power but Says that any workman that ever saw one may Set them to go by Water with much less labour & expence than to go with a Horse—Should you wish to purchase I have two Gins you may have choice at 45/Sau [?] payable at 12 Mo^s.——

I am truly Sorry it is not [2] in my power to give any indulgence on this Execution against you without injury to myself, otherwise I would do it with pleasure, notwithstanding the usage I have met since my acquaintance with you together with the Labour & Loss of cash I expearanced in the Land business¹⁹—

If I had two thousand Dollars I believe I would be able to meet all Demands against but as the ballance would be but a few hundred more perhaps it would not be doing you any favour of Consiquence [,] however if it will & you will make a payment of the two Thousand Dollars to me (in [3] the county of Robeson) by the first of April next I will give you an indulgence for the ballance a few Months—Let me here from you as soon as may be convenieant——

Yours &^c
JRhodes

Lumberton
February 24/
Addressed: John G. Blount esq^r.
Washington
P. Mail

¹⁹ Jacob Rhodes to Blount, June 2, 1796, in this volume.

Josiah Collins, Jr., to John Gray Blount

Edenton 20th March 1802 —

Dear Sir,

I have to solicit your kindness in obtaining payment for the enclosed Treasury Draft for \$1000, and to transmit me the amount of it by M^r Christopher Lewis Lents, who will pass through your place in the course of a few days on his way here — I could wish it to be accompanied with any collections that may have been made from Captain Alderson, the M^r Ellisons, M^r Van Norden, or the Estate of Captain M^cDonald, and to make the whole less cumbersome to M^r Lents, you will add to the favor by procuring Gold or United States Bank Paper, the latter in preference—Be pleased to acknowledge this letter by return of the mail

with much respect, I am D^r Sir

y^r obt sert

Josiah Collins Ju^r

Enclosed—

Draft drawn by TH T Tucker Treasurer of the U States on the Collector of Washington dated 23rd January 1802 N^o 4088 payable to Robert Oliphant or order for \$1000—

John Gray Blount, Esq^{re}

Paid

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r
in his absence to be
opened by M^r William Orr
Washington, N. C.

Reading Blount to John Gray Blount

[April, 1802]

M^r John G Blount

The wheat measured out 228½ bushels [.] there was ground before 525—which makes 753½ bushels sent up—the weight of the wheat has been Generally 52,^{to} I weighed 7 bushels which made 364.^{to} I weighed it with 2 fr —————* & tried them by

* Illegible.

the 56 that you sent me for that purpose, the Flat brings down 7 bb good flower, 8 of Seconds, 3 of the 3 quallity [.] the good is not marked [,] 2 [nd] markd S [,] the other 000 — 68 bb of good Flower has been sent down & had there been barrels to put it in the whole would have been ready—the tide was so low on friday that it was impossable for the Flat to get up sooner than saturday just time to get out the wheat before the rain came on—I have sent down 3^m feet of 11½ Inch plank for Clark & shall this week have his Bill compleated except the rafters when compleated I shall send it down—the wheat sent last will I expect make 33 bb good Flower

Yours

Reading Blount

P.^s I am sorry John & Sis both forgot what I told them about my Flax, its at Readmans please make the negroes bring [it] over to your store

Addressed: M^r John G. Blount

By Sis

*William Charles Lake and Son to John Gray and
Thomas Blount [with enclosures]*

Liverpool 22nd. . April 1802

Mess^{rs}. . J. G. & T. Blount

Gent^{ls}. .

The definitive treaty of Pease [of Amiens] being now signed and commerce conducted without the precarious circumstances attendant on Warfare, permit us to assure you it will afford us pleasure if we can at any time prove serviceable to you at this Port. We annex our Prices Current for your government & remain with esteem and respect

Gent^t

your obed^t. hum Serv^t. .

W^m. . Cha. Lake & Son

Addressed: J: G: & Tho: Blount Esq^{rs}
 Washington
 North Carolina.

by the Robert
 via
 Norfolk

[enclosure]

Prices Current of American Produce—

Tobacco			Pig Iron	7/
James River	2 ^d 1½	5 ^d 1½	Bll Staves W. Oak Pipe	20 24
Rappahannock	} 2 ^d 3 ^d ¾ 1 ^b		Hh ^d	10 14
Potowmack			Brl	5 6
			Red Oak Hh ^d	6 fm
Georgia			Brl	3 fm
Carolina				
Stem'd	3 ^d 1½	5 ^d 1½	Flour, Superfine	39 Bbl
Maryland, brown	2 ^d	3 ^d 1 ^b	fine	36/ d°.
Coloney	3 ^d 1½	4 ^d 1½	Indian Corn	3/6—
Kitefoot	6 ^d	7 ^d 1 ^b		

Indigo, Carolina	2/6	4/6 pC ^{wt} .
Deer Skins	18	20 D°.
Pitch	10 ½	11½ D°.
Turpentine	14/	15/ 6 D°.
Rosin	14/	16½ D°.
Bees Wax	£10	£11 D°.
Ashes, Pearl 1 st .	38/	40½/D°.
Ashes, Pot 1 st .	28/	30/D°.
Rice	36/	40/ D°.
Tar	19/	21/ Bbl
Horns Ox & Cow	30/	60/
Tips	10/	11/
Flaxseed for crushing	5/	6/6
for sowing	12/	15/

John Gaylard²⁰ to John Gray Blount

Germainton 23th. . April 1802—

John G Blount Esquire

dear Sir I have from three to four hundre^d thousan^d 22 Inch Shingles now got and hands Still getting, and shu^d be glad to engage a market for them, Shud it be ina your way to receive as many as will pay the first years Lease of Broad Creek Mills²¹ & what I Subscribed for the new rode I Shud be happy to deliver them, as cash is very scarce ————— and Shud you know of any one that wants I wish youd recommend them to me, the death of my Brother William will Occation me to moove over to Broad Creek myself ————— I am

with Respect your
Obt. . Hl^e Serv^t
John Gaylar^d.

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Merch^t
Washington

Free
John Gaylard

David Stone to John Gray Blount

Washington 4th May 1802

Dear Sir:

I hoped before this time to have more welcome information to communicate respecting the application made to Congress concerning the Tennessee Lands²²—Nothing effectual has been or could be done. I doubt much whether there will ever be a consent obtained to charge the U. S. otherwise than upon the fund to be raised from the Lands themselves—and if the Lands are to af-

²⁰ A Hyde County overseer who later moved to Broad Creek in Beaufort County and engaged in shipbuilding. Gaylard to Blount, November 4, 1802, in this volume; Gaylard to Blount, February 8, 1805, in Blount Papers; *Second Census: 1800*, Hyde County.

²¹ These were probably the mills of Reading Blount which Blount had tried to sell in 1796, and which were now leased to one of the Gaylards. See John Gray to Thomas Blount, March 14, 1796, in this volume.

²² See Nathaniel Macon to Blount, February 2, 1802, in this volume.

ford the fund to pay for themselves probably the holders of Titles will prefer *them* to the Compensation.

The Session ended last evening — It has been shorter than any first Session after [2] an Election since the adoption of the Constitution

I fear nothing from what has been done²³ unless the Impost Revenue should fall considerably below the estimate

I am with Respect & Esteem
Your Humble Servant
David Stone

Free David Stone
Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r
Washington
North Carolina

Joel Dickinson²⁴ to John Gray Blount

Greenville 5th May 1802

Dear Sir

I have sent down to [be]* landed on your Wharf about 120 Barrels Naval ———* Stores, which is intended for Alexandria, Should Capt Fletcher arrive before I go to Washington I will thank you to have them put on Board and make up a Load with Pork, there are likewise a Trunck belonging to Mr Wright, and Three Chests Hyson Skin Tea which I wish sent on if an opportunity should offer should be glad if you would inform when Capt. F. comes in, that I may go down ——— Enclosed are the certificates for the Tea, which if necessary you can give the Captain—

respectfully yours
J. . Dickinson

John G. Blount Esq.
Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq
Certificates Inside

²³ The reference is to the repeal of the excise duties in March, 1802. McMaster, *History of the People of the United States*, II, 614-615.

²⁴ Dickinson has not been identified.

* Hole in manuscript.

*Elizabeth Gautier²⁵ to John Gray Blount*Norfolk May 19th 1802.

Sir

I take the liberty to write to you to desire you to inform me whether M^r. W^m Farish is dead or not; I have been told lately that he was dead, but have not received any confirmation of it; I have wrote to him several times, and also his son in law M^r Leroy and have allways remained without any answer; should that report prove groundless I shall take it as a great favour you would be pleased to shew my letter to him, and express my astonishment at his obstinate silence, as he has not settled yet the business concerning my Ant's Estate. The favour of your answer by the post will greatly oblige,

Sir,

Your most ob^t Servant.

Elizabeth Gautier

P.S.

I wish to inform M^r Farrish I have received a Letter from my Brother wherein he has left his part of the estate to be divided between my Sister Jenkins & I.

Addressed: [John Gray]* Blunt Esq^r
[Wa]*shington
[North]* Carolina

*Benjamin Storey²⁶ to John Gray Blount*Savannah May 22.nd 1802M^r. J. G. Blount

Sir

Upon the receipt of your favour of the 26.th ult^o. We made immediately every inquiry possible concerning your Schooner. But we are sorry to say we cannot obtain any inteligence respecting her. No Vessel of that name has been entred at the customs

²⁵ Elizabeth Gautier has not been identified.

* Manuscript torn.

²⁶ Benjamin Storey has not been identified.

house and Our Ship carpenters say they have not repair'd any Vessel of her description at their yards. we shall still continue our enquiries and if we can obtain any intelligence respecting her shall immediately inform you of the same

With due respect
we remain yours Sincerely
Henry Kneeland & C^o
p^r. Benjⁿ. . Story

P.S. our Henry Kneeland has gone to france

Addressed: J. G. Blount Esq^r
Post Master
Washington
N^o. Carolina

Mail —

Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount

New Bern 24 May 1802

Dear Sir,

When I returned home on the 15th Instant I found your favor of the first. I returned home unwell and have been sick ever since, nor did I see M^r Singleton untill to day. He still sais that the price was six shillings or 60 Cents per bushel, and thinks the quantity I had was only 20 bushels—I don't think I spoke for more only a part was delivered before I left home, in consequence of which I did not get a bill of parcells of it, as I most always do, & no entry was made in my books. Miss Vail rec^d. it after I left home & she thinks the whole quantity was 20 bushels, as I dont know how the business can be rectified, I expect I must be charged with the 40 bus at 6/ — and the a^{ct}. so settled You mention the a^{ct} [as]* settled in Sep^r. 1798. I did not leave home for [Philad]elphia* till late in Nov^r. 1798, and the greater part of the salt I had was rec^d. after that —

It was fully my intention to have gone over to Washington & gone down with you to Hyde Court in case you went there but I am now so unwell with fever & the gout in my left hand & right Elbow, that I fear I shall not be well enough to go. I hate to go

* Hole in manuscript.

abroad in a Crippled state. let me know by next post if you go, and how we can get from woodstock down to the Court house &c. &c. and If I find I can go I will & be at Washington by Saturday night.

My present attack I owe to an accident; I left this on the 28. April to go to Fayette Court, & from thence crossed the Country to see Mr. [Thomas?] Blount In doing so I upset my chair & hurt myself much [2] I had no outward bruise that I could discover but having lost my activity, I fell like a *sack*, & the chair going fast with great violence on hard ground I was pitched some distance and my whole weight fell on my right shoulder. the jolt I rec^d. produced fever & sickness at stomach & a total loss of appetite, these have produced gout in various joints, & it will leave me only when it pleases—My family are in pretty good health. I hope yours are well—M^{rs} Spaight joins me in Compliments to M^{rs}. Blount. Excuse my pen the boys have spoiled it & I cant mend it—I am with much Esteem.

Your friend
Rich^d Dobbs Spaight

Jn^o G. Blount Esq.^r

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq.^r

P.M.

Washington
N^o Carolina

William Blackledge to William Orr

New Bern 24th. . May 1802

Dear William,

Agreeably to your request communicatd through T[homas]. H[arvey]. B[lount].²⁷ I have examined for & find the Bonds given by JGB. & B Blackledge as follows

One Bond	\$67.6 1/4	}	177.91 3/4	due 22 ^d . June 97
one do . .	110 28 1/2			
one ditto . .	67. 6 3/4	}	177.91 3/4	due 22 ^d . . August 97
" "	110.28 1/2			

²⁷ Son of John Gray Blount, then in New Bern. William Blackledge to Blount, December 20, 1800, in this volume.

for goods Imported in Brig N^o Carolina from Liverpool & all four dated 22^d October 1796

There are also two more Signed by the same parties for the same amount for goods imported in the same vessel & due the 22^d. . October 97 upon these it appears suit was instituted against JG Blount only

The mistake in the date of the Execution returned Satisfied is what misleads you in the two Bonds of Jethro Hillman and John G. Blount, the date of the Execution should be 1801 instead 1791. One of the Bonds is for 738.61½ for one ——* the West india goods entered at the Collectors Office, imported by Jethro Hillman in Sloop Sooky from Guadaloupe—the other is for one half the West india goods saved from the wreck of the same vessel

There are but two Judgments now ag^t. . M^r Blount & one of them is on one the Bonds of Jethro Hillman & JGBlounts—for \$738.61½ Cents due 8th. . Jan.^y 1797 the other on the Bond of Hans Patten & Jacob Blount for \$504 . . 10 due 23.^d Jan.^y 1799 for 1½ the West india Goods imported in the Schooner Grampus by Jacob Blount from Jamaica,

I am with esteem
Yours rspfully
W^m Blackledge

[2] Please tell M^r. . [Thomas] Blount that I wrote him from Green Court on the subject of his Judgment against Pope which is for £221.15.2 besides the Costs £41.8 & that I recommended it to him to attach at once & summon the Executors of John Pope Garnishees

WB

Addressed: Mr. William B. Orr
Port Washington

* Illegible.

*Isaac Levi*²⁸ to Benjamin [John Gray] Blount [with enclosure]

Benjemen G. Blunt²⁹ [June 9, 1802]

Sir

with pleasure I embrace the present oppertunity to inform you that I took the liberty of addressing you two Others of different dates which I am led to beli[ev]e neve[r] Came to hand from not seeing an answer, the purport of this will enform you that I have Established myself in this [place.] I lend as broker and Commissi[on] Merchant and am happy to say to Some effect—and knowing the Extent of your house and therfor solic[i]t yur friendship—and flatter myself that your Confidence if you think proper to place it with me will answer your most sanguine expectations as it will be my utmost ambition to use dispatch and punctelety [punctuality] as the grand object of mercantle Connections—Every thing her is on the rise—ther for I her enclosed you a small price curent.

I am Sir your most
Obt. Humble Sir Isaac Levi

St Peer [Saint Pierre] Juni th 9. 1802.

[enclosure]

		Prces Curnt —		
	D	C ^s	D	C ^s
best McKvad [?] suger			Superfine flere	10
	D		fine dit	9
in this Island	5		Ship bread	4
C*— oil	6		Mollases	5
Wher [?]	7		Pilot oe [?]	7
Coffe	G 100 st .14		Rice	5
Caco	100		Tobac	8
Rum	Cents 50		Pitch pine lumb	38
Cotton	28 Dollrs		Cyprs Shingel	5
			Rye fler	7
			Corn meal	5
			Corn	3

²⁸ Levi (or Levy) was formerly of North Carolina and had established himself in 1800 as a broker in the West Indies. Isaac Levi to Blount, February 16, July 21, 1800, in this volume.

²⁹ Although the name Benjamin occurs in various branches of the Blount family, the address of this letter is probably in error, as earlier correspondence from Levi fits the description below. Levi to Blount, February 16, July 21, 1800, in this volume.

* Illegible.

Codfish	5
——* dit	4
salmon	9
pickeld fish	6
whit pin lumb	25
Boston Shingel ...	3
pork	18
beef	14
hams	1 1/6
Butte .....contin ...	25 ^{et}
hogs lard	25
	Drs
Red oke ——*	45
W Dito—if large ..	45
Black Ey peas	6

Addressed: Benjemen G. Blunt
 Merchant
 Washington
 North Carolina

p^r fav, Cap

strange

Benjamin Coakley to John Gray Blount

Princeton 10th June 1802

Dear Sir

Your favor of the 15th May I rece^d. at the Fisherey the last of may when M^r John Little³⁰ was with me receiving fish for the advances he had made for me this Spring and as I had disposed of all the fish I had for sale to M^r Little I requested him to Write you on the subject, I am sorry you did not let me know sooner that you wanted fish as I could have furnished you on good terms, for I have Shipped a good many to New York & Philadelpha where I expect to get but little for them—I caught upwards of four Millions of Herrings this Spring and could have

* Illegible.

³⁰ A merchant and shipowner of Edenton. *Second Census: 1800*, Chowan County; John Little to Blount, July 24, 1802, in this volume; Little to Blount, September 6, 1803, in John Gray Blount Papers.

caught a great many more if I could have got Salt but was out of that article ten days in the height of the season which compeled me to sell Herrings at three fourths of a Dollar p^r Thous- and to keep my hand [s?] Joging on until M^r Little could procure me Salt to close my fishing expedition this Spring which he accomplished after the Arrival of Drews Vessels, but proved too late for my making as many Barrels of fish as I expected, I sold better than Sixteen Hundred Thousand Herrings green and [2] Barreled 3072 Barrels of Herrings Shads Rocks &^c. Say 2030 Barrels of Whole Herrings 800 of Cut Ditto 218 Shads and 24 of Cats & Rocks which makes the above quantity and out of which I have only reserved for my Self ten Barrels Cats two of Shads one of Rocks and one of Herrings[.] the rest I have paid to my Creditors as I have done this three years past with every thing I had or could make [,] being involved in difficulties by trust- ing my Property in the hand of Vilianous Captains and Super- cargoes who has robed me of my Property and left me to work through my difficulties the best manner I can, having no friend in this quarter to advise with or even whom I can communicate my sentiments to, I feel perfectly disgusted with this place and wish to move from it as soon as I can arrange my affairs to do so and as I have been always attached to your place and am sensible of your Friendship I would wish to move there if you think there is any prospect of my doing business to an advan- tage [.] I have a good many Negros in my possession and cant do with out a farm and wish to lease some place convenient to Town where I would wish to place my Negros[.] as to my Family I wish to live in Town with [3] them and carry on some kind of business I will thank you to write me your opinion on the receipt of this M^{rs} Coakley Joins me in Complements to M^{rs}. Blount and Family and remain with due

Respect yours &^c.

B. . Coakley

Addressed: John G Blount Esq^r.
Merch^t.
Washington N C

Loring and Seaver³¹ to John Gray Blount

Boston June 17. 1802

John G. Blount Esq^r

Sir

We take the liberty of forwarding you this Circular, by which you will observe, that the Co. of SARGENT, LORING, and SEAVER, has been my [by?] mutual consent dissolved. The business will in future be carried on by Ourselves, at this place, under the Firm of LORING and SEAVER, and we presume, from our experience in the Commission business, that we shall be able to do justice to all those who favor us with their commands: Under this impression, we offer you our best services at this place. Our business in SAVANNAH will be conducted under the Firm of LORING, SEAVER, and Co. having taken into Copartnership Mr. HENRY PELHAM, a young gentleman, who has resided there with us for several years. We also do ourselves the pleasure to inclose you our Prices Current.

Our E L: when at Washington having had the pleasure of handing you a line from M. Henry Kneeland We take the liberty to forward you this circular, in Oct^r 1800 We endorsed a note for M^r Joseph Brickell ³² of your place for 2948 - 64 — with interest & cm^s there is a ball^e due us of about 436\$[.] We have wrote M Brickell several times but can get no answer, We write Him p this opp^v if you will take the trouble to call on him & know why He has so neglected us & inform us if there is a prospect of procuring payment without a suit, or if it will be most advisable to sue Him at once, We will receive it as a particular fav^r We feel that We are not authorised to call on you in this manner, but having no correspondent in your place is Our only apology — We shall at all times be happy to render you any services in Our power

We are your Friends
Loring & Seaver

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq.
Merchant
Washington
North Carolina

³¹ This firm has not been identified.

³² Joseph Brickle, a slaveowner of Washington, North Carolina. *Second Census: 1800*, Beaufort County.

*Amos Johnston to John Gray Blount*Tuckahoe 21st. June 1802—.

Dear Sir)

The business I had of yours in Bladen is in a complicated Situation,³³ I intended taking some depositions in behalf of Robison, but some of the persons were at Wilmington and one gone to S^c. Carolina therefore I got Ja^s. Bradley Esq^r.³⁴ to attend & take them [He]* promised to send me copies of such as he took, as I might send them to you, I also told him I should be at Bladen court at June Term, but when tha[t]* time come M^{rs}. Johnston was very sick with the measles and has continued sick ever since which will put it out of my power to go an^d. . return by the Sup^r. Court, I got your Deed done and have it with my papers to deliver to you, I found the evidence of Gen^l. Brown & Jo^s. R. Gautier was very Material in the suit and Supoenoyd them, — with respect to the direct Taxes on our Lands the lists were not made out therefore could not pay it.—

I want to sell you all my Bladen Titles as I am now confined at home, and will sell to you the Carvers Creek Land for \$1250 — the lake Creek Mill seat at 50 Cents p^r. Acre, and the rest at 8 Cents p^r. Acre, which Land I will [2] take any thing in payment such as rum Sugar, Molasses, Coffe Salt Iron or any other kind of Merchandize—I shall se you at the Sup^r. Court at which I am once more a Juror. my best Compliments to M^{rs}. Blount Mr. Blackledge and all friends.

I am with esteem
your most Ob^t. Serv^t.

A. . Johnston

John G Blount Esq^r

Free

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Washington

Post/

³³ Blount had extensive holdings in Bladen County which were in litigation over a sheriff's sale. Blount to Thomas Brown, October 23, 1798, in this volume.

³⁴ A moderately wealthy citizen of Bladen County. He later served as Blount's agent in Bladen. Blount to Bradley, July 22, 1802, in this volume. *Second Census: 1800*, Bladen County.

* Hole in manuscript.

*William Shannon to John Gray Blount*Philad^a. . 23^d. June 1802

D Sir/

Your letter of the 30th May ulto p^r Captain Oliphant came safe to hand the 17th instant, and its contents duly notice^d — The Captain did not sell any of your two feet Shingles as you directed either at Willmington or Frankford — I have caused them to be stored, in hopes that they will do pretty well soon for Shipping, as there are none of them here, and have advertised them for that purpose. The three feet are remarkably plenty, more so than has ever been known, I have not sold any of either yours or mine, about 13 dollars is the price.—When sold I will hand Mr Ball the proceeds as you direct, of which I have already informed him. Please inform Mr Baker that I shall probably start from here a Vessell about 1. July next—I find by your Note he has received the Waggon—the drawing & knives & Books [2] shall go by first conveyance—The Prices of Naval Stores &C^a. . have hereto annexed as well as I had in my power to procure, as they are not in demand it is more difficult to ascertain

Tar	2	..	25	doll rather expected to rise
Turpentine	2	..	50	these uncertain —
Rosin	2	..	50	
Varnish			40	
S. Turpentine			40	

I am D Sir

Your Obd^t ServantW^m Shannon

Addressed: John G Blount
Washington
North Carolina

Mail

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarborough 28th June 1802

Dear Sir,

Jackey has determined in her own mind that there is no place of Safety³⁵ in this State but Shell Castle and therefore she is not only willing but anxious to go there—Nancy Jones is of the same opinion & declares her determination to go there in terms the most unequivocal—you will therefore have the company of Jackey, Nancy Jones & myself—let me know when we must appear at Washington prepared to embark & what I must previously Send down towards House keeping that is, how much Bacon, meal, Flour &c what articles of Bedding & other furniture—and how many Servants & whether male or female.

Three Negroes were tried here on Saturday last for conspiring, plotting &c. to make Insurrection³⁶ & murder the white people, and one of them viz^t. Davie the property of Elisha Battle Sen^r was found guilty & Sentenced to be hanged on Wednesday next between 12 & 2 o'Clock—another fellow apprehended & committed at the same time is to have his trial on Monday the 5th July & it is expected that he also will be hanged unless he should save himself by turning State's evidence [2] of which there is some hope, as since the conviction of Davie he has prayed & cried almost incessantly—The witness against the whole 4 is Essex a young fellow of remarkable good Character the property of a M^r Horne—the substance of his testimony against Davie was, the last Sunday fortnight—Say the 13th Inst—as he went from the falls of Tar River where Shadrack (the fellow to be tried on Monday next) had told him that Harry (one of the Fellows acquitted on Saturday last) was a captain to fight the white folks, Davie took him aside & told him that he (D) was a Captain to fight the white folks—that the object of the fight was to kill all the white Men & Such of the white women as had been worst to Negroes; that old M^r Johnston (meaning Amos) was to be one of the first that was killed—that the fight was to begin the last of this month or beginning of next to the edge of Nash—that from there two gangs of the Negroes were to proceed down the Country, one by the Cokey road & the other by the River and that when all the white men were killed the Black

³⁵ From slave insurrection and possible fever epidemic. See below.

³⁶ For an account of this slave conspiracy see Johnson, *Ante-Bellum North Carolina*, 510-513.



Thomas Blount (1759-1812). Photograph of a portrait owned by Mrs. E. T. Knott, Washington, N. C., by Credle Studios, also of Washington.

men were to take their places, have their wives &c. &c. But although the witness mentioned this & other circumstances with an air of [3] truth, I was impressed with a Belief that he either did not know their whole plan, or concealed much of what he knew. He said he did not know where the plan originated or how far it extended, but he understood from what Shadrack & Davie said on the subject that a negro man somewhere in Virg^a. was at work under the ground making tools for them to fight with & that when the fight was begun all the negroes were to join those who commenced. Many more negroes are expected to be brought to Gaol this week from the same neighbourhood—that some of our Town gentry are posse[ssed of]* the secret I do not doubt, but as yet we have not been able to find them out—Should any thing more transpire by confession or otherwise, I shall let you know it by first opportunity—In the mean time I would advise the people of your Town & neighbourhood to use more than ordinary vigilance for certain I am that the secret is possessed by some among them, perhaps one in almost every large family—all well & send love &c.

Y^{rs}. Sincerely
Tho. Blount

Free

Addressed: John Gray Blount, Esq^r.
Washington

Mail:

Richard Dobbs Spaight to John Gray Blount

New Bern 1st. July 1802

Dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge the rec^t of your favor of the 22^d June. I should have gone over to Washington so as to have gone down with you to Hyde, but I found that I was not well enough, at the time I ought to have gone having my left hand and arm still lame with the effects of my *oversett*.³⁷ I wished much to see those lands and was sorry to miss may Court as I suppose it to be the best time of the year to go there. I think it would be im-

* Writing obscured by seal.

³⁷ Spaight had been injured in a fall. Spaight to Blount, May 24, 1802, in this volume.

prudent to drain the lake so low as to destroy the navigation, & ruin the mills, unless indeed the whole Lake could be drained & the land now covered by it could be cultivated to advantage, which I suppose cannot be done. Pray how high is the present surface of the Lake above the Sound at Common high water and what fall will you have to your mill? There is an Old Scotchman at Fayette, who with only a $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet fall & an 18 feet water wheel carries a grist mill & a Cotton Machine that will clean 15 or 1600 of Seed Cotton in a day, they are made to go both together or singly, at pleasure——

Nothing has transpired here to give us any Certainty respecting there having been a Conspiracy formed here by the Slaves³⁸—tho' from their general Conduct I am of Opinion that they have had such designs & still cherish [2] them. But I hope the Steps taken and the Vigilance of the people will prevent them from putting them into execution. Should any thing be discovered your way, please to let me know it, and I will write respecting any information that may be obtained here. Has there been any alarm at or about Tarborough, Pitt or Nash? as the conspiracy had taken place in Halifax & Martin Counties, both of which are contiguous counties. I should suspect that the Slaves in the former Counties were acquainted with the design. Have you heard whether the Negroes of Warren & Franklin, Granville and Wake are supposed to have entered into any Conspiracy. In Halifax County Virginia, which Joins Warren & Granville in this State, numbers have been taken up, & 7 or 8 hanged.

Could a house be got down at the Barr I believe Mrs. Spaight would go down there³⁹ to spend the warm Season but as my family is large & would require a Sitting room & three bed rooms, I do not suppose that one that could accommodate us could be found or at best rented there. Nor do I know how we could be supplied with fresh meats, vegetables milk butter &c. to live on. On these heads, as you are well acquainted with the place, you give us some information. Mrs. Spaight is extremely uneasy about this negro business, and her present situation (She will probably lie in in two or three weeks) renders that uneasiness more prejudicial than it would be at any Other time. I should wish she was in a place where she could think herself [3] in a state of safety. Should an insurrection take place I consider this town as much safer than either Raleigh or Warrenton, as both of those Counties have a great number of Negroes & Warren

³⁸ See Thomas to John Gray Blount, June 28, 1802, in this volume.

³⁹ Shell Castle Island.

more blacks than Whites and the counties adjoining have all a large black population—at this place there would be an Opportunity to get ones family away by Water, in case it should become necessary—The Barr I should consider as a safer place & Mrs Spaight would likewise think so, but whether it would be eligible for her to go there in her present situation, where she can have no medical aid, & probably little other assistance is a question with me. At the same time if she remains here, her fears will prey on her mind & be very detrimental to her.

I wish you to write by the return of post, and give both what information & advice you can on this subject.

I am with real Esteem

Yours sincerely

Rich^d: Dobbs Spaight

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr.

[John Goelet]⁴⁰ to John Gray Blount

Dear Sir//

I have by G. Stubbs sent you the ferriage⁴¹ for the quarter up to 1st of July \$13. I beg leave to observe that the price I have for carrying this year is considerably reduced, together with the extra expence of white Riders makes it necessary for me to curtail my expences as much as I possibly can, I hope Sir it will be in your Power to reduce the price of ferriage something of which you will please advise me, having fitted up a carriage for the conveyance of Travellers, you will please let the person who attends the ferry, keep an account of its passing as one of the Riders will occasionally drive, which ferriage I will settle whe[n]* I do for the mail, which I shall do regularly wh[en I]* receive my pay which will be one month after ——* falls due

⁴⁰ Possibly the wealthy slaveowner of this name who lived in Washington County. *Second Census: 1800*, Washington County. Well-to-do men, like the Blounts, often contracted for carrying the mail and subcontracted it to others. Goelet apparently lived at Buncombe Hall, a 55-room residence on Kendricks Creek near Roper. Robinson, *North Carolina*, 436.

⁴¹ Blount operated a ferry across the Tar River near Washington. Lida T. Rodman (ed.), *Journal of a Tour to North Carolina by William Attmore, 1787* (Chapel Hill: The University [of North Carolina Press; Volume XVII, Number 2, of the *James Sprunt Historical Studies*], 1922), 44.

* Manuscript torn.

agreeable to the Post Master General's advertisement in the papers,

[John Goelet]

Addressed: John G. Blount Esquire
Washington

by George Stubbs—

w^h. 13\$

[*endorsed*: John Goelet]

Benjamin Smith to John Gray Blount

Belvedere⁴² 10th: July 1802

Dear Sir

I left a letter in Town yesterday to go by this Post in which I wrote to you fully about Ship Carpenters & informed you of a Proposal made by Cap^t: Eastwood—Having since heard from a Quarter that ought to be friendly to him that it is very probable we will not agree—That his temper & Conduct is difficult to be borne and being further cautioned to be careful in committing any Contract I make to writing—I am induc'd to ask of your Friendship such information as you have it in your power to give respecting his Disposition, Integrity & abilities—all of which shall be kept perfectly private & to myself if you desire & it be of an unfavourable nature—God knows I have Irons enough in the Fire & Ship building is a new business altogether to me but I think by engaging in it I may assist others, benefit our little town at the mouth of the River⁴³ & employ my Resources of Timber plank Jobbing Carpenters & Blacksmiths to advantage—I have the offer of a Man from the Kings yard at Sheerness⁴⁴ who writes to me he can bring out as many others as I want but he Wishes to know the price or [2] Terms I will give and this will take time besides which I prefer an american to head the business believing one from your part of the Country will probably possess more ingenuity in drafting or moulding—Cap^t: Eastwood says the Vessel He proposes to build viz a Ship

⁴² A residence of Benjamin Smith on the outskirts of Wilmington. Smith apparently had another home, "Orton," 18 miles outside of Wilmington. Robinson, *North Carolina*, 364-365; Smith to Blount, September 8, 1802, n.58, in this volume.

⁴³ The town of Smithville was founded in 1792 by Benjamin Smith and others at the mouth of the Cape Fear River in Brunswick County. Its name was changed in 1889 to Southport. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, map opposite 64; Robinson, *North Carolina*, 269.

⁴⁴ A port on an island at the mouth of the Thames River, noted for its naval repair yard. *Encyclopædia Britannica* [Eleventh Edition], XXIX, 822.

or Brig of 200 Tons may be done in 4 months by two White Workmen capable of carrying up the side of a Vessel who may be procurd for One hundred Dollars pr Month the two—

	100
2 good Black hands that may be got at 16 D ^{rs} —	32
4 handyfellows @ 15 D ^{rs}	60
	<hr/>
	192
Say finding Negroes &c	8
	<hr/>
	200
	4 Mo
	<hr/>
	800

What d^o you think of this calculation or what do you think I may fairly expect will be the cost of Timber Plank Iron work & Nails Say as my part of the Labor & then what would the Vessel *easily* sell for in *Cash*? Do not you think from Peace being made Vessels will probably fall in Price? and that Carpenters Wages should & will fall? Will it not be best to begin on a small scale first? & hire only Smith & his man instead of they & the Tooleys also—I wish to hear your opinions & information & desire not any conclusive bargain to be made till you favour D^r Sir y^{rs} with Regard

Benj Smith

Addressed: John G: Blount Esqr
Washington

Post

Peter Conway to John Gray Blount

Phia. July the 12th. 1802

Dear Sir,

I am Sorry to be So troublesome to you but having undertaken the Executorship of Doct^r. J Halls Estate, Obliges me, to Solicit your immediate Attention, by informing me, whether the Taxes of the Lands in Beauford, & Hyde are paid up, & how they Stand. This is the third letter I have troubled you with, Since I received your favor, acknowledging the Rec^t. of two hundred

dollars, which you were good enough to Say, you would See to the Taxes being paid and Send me on Receipts. The distance is too great for me to come, just for that purpose alone. I am willing to pay for any expence or trouble, you may be at, with pleasure. & hope this will be the last year I Shall Trouble you on this business and you know how an Executor Stands. To many People to scrutinize there conduct. I trust & hope you'l excuse my being So Solicitous by giving me the Earliest information. Which will be ever acknowledged by

Your most Ob^t. & very
Hbl^e. Sv^t.
P. Conway

[2] I intended to have wrote by W^m. Shannon to whom please present my compliments & tell him, his Family is well. & so is the first Consul.

P.C.

Addressed: Col^o. John G. Blount
Washington
North Carolina

Benjamin Smith to John Gray Blount

Wilmington 15th: July 1802

Dear Sir

My thanks for your favour of the 11th: March should have been returned Sooner but after my Arrival from the Southward which was much later in the Spring than I expected such a multiplicity of engagements occupied my attention that I have neglected the Scheme of Shipbuilding 'till this day when Capt. Eastwood falling into conversation on the Subject has fixed my mind to the business mentioned. He proposes that We Should be jointly concerned in building a Vessel of about 200 Tons & to compleat the Hull with Spars Caps & Tops or rather to find the workmen and Materials—He to Superintend—on his part He is to fit her compleat for C with the Rigging Ironwork, Sails Rigging Anchors & Cables suitable[.] the Materials not new from the Rope walk but Such as is good Stout & Stanch and fit for such a Vessel—The Boats & inside ——* to be a joint Concern when ready for Sea Each hold half—[2] He approves of M^r: Smith but

* Illegible.

thinks his price entirely too high—He says that some Men were here from the same place working at 1½ Dollar per day finding themselves⁴⁵ but this was jobbing & long Shore work & such was dirty & troublesome & for a new long & steady Job they may be expected cheaper—Their name is Tooleys—I wish to get Smith as the principle & another White Man capable of carrying up the side of a Vessel For whom say both of them and his Negro such as you describe him I will give 100 D^{rs}: p^r: Month—or for himself Negro & the two Tooleys not more than 140 Dollars p^r Month or 1680 the year They finding themselves or allowing me 12 Dollars per Month for board at which I can get ——* I propose building at Smithville on account of the vicinity of the Timber & the healthiness of the place to which numbers of families are already gone & more daily thronging on account of the coolness & salubrity of the air—If they can be got at less I trust you will act for me as for yourself & indeed do not wish a ——* made & that you will be so good as to inform me as quick as possible what I may depend on & then I will without delay give an immediately Reply—Please also favor me with some opinion of Cap^t. Eastwoods offer & believe me with great Respect D^r Sir Y^{rs} Benj Smith

[3] PS Perhaps it will be better for me to give Smith for himself & Negro \$700 p^r an^m. No finding—& drop the Tooleys but in this case Smith must warrant his Negro capable of carrying up the side of a Vessel.

Addressed: John G: Blount Esquire
Washington

Post

John Gray Blount to Christopher Dudley⁴⁶ [Copy]

New Bern July 21st. . 1802

Chris. Dudley Esq^r.

D^r Sir,

two years ago I gave you 40/. to pay the tax on Grangers neck for the Heirs of William Blount[;] when that is expended please inform me, And let me beg you to

⁴⁵ I.e., providing their own food and lodging. Benjamin Smith to Blount, July 16, 1802, in this volume.

* Illegible.

⁴⁶ A large slaveowner of Onslow County. *Second Census: 1800*, Onslow County.

take the trouble to give in that land 640 Acres as the property of the Heirs of William Blount

And believe me to be
with must esteem &c—
JG.Blount

Christopher Dudley Esq.^r. Onslow County.

John Gray Blount to James Bradley [Copy]

July 22nd. 1802

James Bradley Esquire—

Dr. . Sir—

The Law of the last Assembly has made it necessary that every man who has lands in other Counties than that in which he lives should trouble some of his friends to give it in for taxes—As I am unfortunate enough to hold some in Bladen, I take the liberty of inclosing to you a list of the same with a request that as my agent you will return the same—I have also inclosed you five pounds out of which please pay the Tax on the lands contained in that list for the year 1801.—And should the white Marsh Land formerly Gibbs now Luke Robinsons be offered for sale for the taxes, please pay the same, and inform me, the amount shall be immediately forwarded to you—

Mr. Amos Johnson informs me that you are possessed with the proof of notice to Harvey of the time of taking Depositions,—
[2] Will you please forward that proof to him or me that it may be filed in the Clerk's office—

I am with much esteem
Yours to serve
JG. Blount

Part of the Lands I purchased of Jno. Gibbs was an entry in the name of Gibbs, say 300 Acres, for which the entry money was paid—And the warrant is now in the hands of a Surveyor named who promised Mr. Johnson to survey and return the same that I might get a grant—Mr. Batey I am told has entered & got a grant for the same land—It is therefore important that I get a grant of Gibbs's warrant—Will you please urge Mr. — to survey & return the same, & pay him his fees

for the same—And when he has made his return inform me that I may get the grant—This will give you much trouble which I hope you will excuse with a belief that I would do as much to serve you, which be assured I shall at all times be happy to do—

JGBlount

[3] List of Lands owned by John Gray Blount in Bladen County—

- 2618 Acres. Two thousand six hundred & eighteen acres, between black river & Colley Swamp—
- 1170 D° — One thousand one hundred & seventy Acres, between south river & Colley Swamp —
- 325 D° — Three hundred & twenty five Acres, on the East side of Colley including M^c.— Nutts Branch—
- 250 Acres. Two hundred & fifty Acres on the East side of Colley Swamp Adjoining Sikes's lines
- 70 Acres— Seventy Acres—On the S^o. W^t. side of the South River and on Moor's Swamp—
- 135 Acres— One hundred & thirty five Acres, on both sides of black creek between black creek bay & Lake Creek Bay—
- 100 Acres— One hundred Acres, on the head of Rowan Swamp—
- 100 Acres— One hundred Acres, on both sides of Johns Swamp—
- 4768 Acres Total—

please also give in for Luke Robinson the following land.

- 640 Acres including John Gibbs plantation
- 300 D° — Adjoining the above—
- 200 D° — Adjoining the Above first mentioned
- 1140 Acres

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarb°. 24th July 1802

Dear Sir,

Mr Hudson lost the Letter you entrusted to his care for me, with all the rest of his papers—he supposes he left them at Mrs. Clement's—but from what he told me of it's contents I wrote by the last mail to Mr Turner informing him that our utmost exertions to raise Cash for him, which our gratitude for his delicate & friendly forbearance had induced us to make, had proved ineffectual, owing to the uncommon scarcity of the article; & requesting to know if he can further indulge us by accepting payment in Coffee delivered here at the Petersburg price which we suppose to be 22 Cents p. ———* or thereabouts. I thought it better to write on Mr Hudson's information, as he seemed confident that he remembered well what you said was contained in your Letter, than to lose a week in making an offer to Mr Turner that must please him even if he should not accept it. as Jackey's fears [2] of Insurrection, which first made her think of going to the castle, diminish, her fears of the dangers of the Sea encrease—and because She is unwilling to encounter the inconvenience of carrying provisions, furniture &c. she has declined the Trip. We shall go to Warren as usual in about a fortnight. She commands me to offer her Love to your family with her condolence for your Loss⁴⁷—accept & offer mine—

Yours as usual
Tho Blount

Addressed: John Gray Blount, Esq^{re}.
Washington

Mr. Keais

* Illegible.

⁴⁷ The reference is not clear. It is possibly to the death of Blount's daughter Harriot who is not mentioned again in the Blount Papers, although she is mentioned in letters prior to this date. The standard genealogies do not list Harriot, indicating that she died at an early age. Mary Blount to [Susannah Harvey], November 2, 1796; and Anne Harvey to Polly Blount, May 11, 1800, in this volume; Armstrong, *Notable Southern Families*, I, 34.

Josiah Collins, Jr., to John Gray Blount

Edenton 24th July 1802—

Dear Sir,

I reached home the next day after I parted with you—The baulking of the Horses, owing to the soreness, tho' no——* was to be seen, of their shoulders I suppose, gave me some trouble at my leaving Jacksons and several times afterwards. I found my Father nearly ready to proceed to New York with the little Girls, and tomorrow was the day fixed on for their departure, but Betsey having been attacked with an intermitting fever two days ago, will delay it—

I was much mortified that my Father had been so credulous as to give any credit to Burroughs tale about my money, and that he suffered him to leave this without having been served with a writ—He alledges that he did not ——* from Captain Lingo's Vessel to the Wreck until those on board called out a Chest, & that he found it to be his own with the Lid washed off; that while he was there there was another call of a Chest which was the Captains, and in the same [2] condition, the lid off; that every thing in his own Chest was washed out except some Cloaths that were packed under the till, among which he had light Gold to the amount of about 60 Dollars, that Captain Lingo took possession and an Inventory of every thing whatever that was brought on board his Vessel, and refused to give him any thing at all, even his cloaths until he made friends of some merchants at Savannah, who interceded in his behalf with Lingo: that he borrowed money from him to pay for the protest that he entered—and he denies that he ever saw the Saddle Bags at all, even on board the Brig—Will you do me the favor to ask Captain Lingo about all this, and inform me, particularly about the Bags, and the condition of the Chests, and whether the money found in the Captain's Chest, of which Burroughs had 62 Dollars by his own A c c t, was in Dollars or not, and if it was, whether about 150 Dollars were not in a shot bag, and 48 in a small Bag made of a piece of sheet[?]

[3] I expect that Mr Potter will be at Washington in a few days, and from thence will go to Mr Jos Greens to inspect his

* Illegible.

Cotton Machine; Will you be so good as to give him a letter of introduction to Mr Green——

I very much hope that Mrs Blount has recovered——

I am very respectfully, D Sir,
yr obt sert
Josiah Collins Junr

Free

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esqr
Washington
N C

John Little to John Gray Blount

Edenton 24^h July 1802

Dear Sir

I duly rec^d—your favor of the 22nd Ulto, & immediately wrote to Mr. Coakley (enclosing yr letter) to know whether he could furnish the 50 bll Herrings; for having given over the expectation of hearing from you, I had directed him, to dispose of what he had on hand up the Country if he could, therefore could not give you an answer until I heard from him, which, (owing to a passage of my letter on the road) I did not do until the day before yesterday——

He writes me that he had disposed of all that were remaining on hand, previous to the re^c of my letter of course it will not be in my power to furnish you with the 50 bl^s, nor can I hear of any that are for Sale except about that quantity in the hands of Charles Harvey, who now resides in Gates County——

I am yr Ob^t Serv^t—
John Little

PS—I believe you could get them cheaper from N York or Philad^a., than from this quarter, even if they were to be had— Since the foregoing I have seen Mr J Armistead who tells me that he can Supply you, & has written to you—you can therefore apply to him if you should still want——

JL

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Merchant
Washington

*J. Delacour⁴⁸ to John Gray Blount*Cape francois 27th. July 1802

Mr Blount

Sir

I have to offer you our acknowledgements for the favour of your recommendation to several vessels from y^r Port which have arrived here Successively particularly Cap^t Howard whose acquaintance I value much.

The markets for Lumber since you left this⁴⁹ have lowered considerably from the large quantities have arrived from different parts of the United States, they are Still However Saving and I am firmly of opinion that before you can be here with a Cargo it will have reasumed something above the present price unless indeed very enormous quantities would be shipped which I do not presume from any thing I can collect at any rate[.] let the Cargo you Ship be assorted well and Warranted now under 18 feet long such Cargoes are worth 5 a 10\$ more than Common. Shingles will fall below 8\$ ere long from the quantity arrived . . . I Shall be very happy to hear occasionally from you With respect I am

Y^r Obliged Serv^t
J Delacour

Scantling	\$50 @ 55
Shingles . . .	10 @ 11
Staves . . .	36 . 40
Flour . . .	7 8
Pork	17 . 19
Herrings	6 7

Addressed: Mr. Blount
Care Capt John Alderson
Washington
NC

⁴⁸ A West Indian merchant otherwise unidentified.

⁴⁹ I.e., since your last ship left here. The only known trip that Blount personally made to the West Indies was one to secure military supplies there during the Revolutionary War. Reed, *Beaufort County*, 107. Note the use of "you" later in this letter.

*Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount*Tarborough 2^d. Aug^t. 1802

Dear Sir,

As I am under the necessity of naming a time to Mr Turner when he shall be paid the amount of our Debt to them as agent for Hawkins, & that time must be at or before the next Halifax Sup^r. Court, I will, when I see him, name Halifax as the place & the first day of the court as the time; upon a supposition that the Coffee & Rum can be sold at the prices mentioned, if not rec^d. by him, & that one of your three vessels will return in time to furnish the Balance — his conduct towards us has been friendly & delicate to such a degree that I would sacrifice property to double the amount of his claim rather than disappoint him—but Ross & Parker will get a Judg^t. against me at our next County Court for about \$500 & that alone will oblige me to sell more property than could have been purchased 3 years ago for three times the sum; because in this part of the country there is no money—pray is it not possible for us to draw some little assistance, on an emergency like this, from our Brother Reading now that Lumber is so much in demand & a Cash article? let me hope to hear sometimes from you while you continue at the castle where I wish you a pleasant & healthy residence—

Y^{rs}. &c.

Tho. Blount

Addressed: John Gray Blount, Esq^{re}.

Washington

Mr. Harvey.

*Arthur Jones⁵⁰ to John Gray Blount*Edenton Augst. 9th. 1802

Dear Sir

You were oblidging enough to accept, with Mr. Leroy, the arbitration of a matter in dispute between Mr. Wright and myself relative to the weight of Pork, what has been the result?

I took the liberty by various means, to request Mr. John Wallace to send me proof that Jonathan Dubois went out with

⁵⁰ Jones has not been identified.

the Alice, Jasper. I think I troubled you on the subject or at least requested it thro Mr. John Salter. Mr. Salters Interest & my own in some degree required this proof but whether negligence in Mr. Wallace or some other cause, I have not got it. Will you render me service to write to Mr. Wallace on the subject, and if you can rely on my word before I produce proofs, to contradict a report circulated by a very bad man (*John Martin*)⁵¹ at the Castle [2] that I had wrote to Charleston, to caution the underwriters there not to take any risk for the Carolina Merchants, that they run Vessels on Shore to defraud. this is false, the Charge is against John Martin or a Captain put into his Ship the Cicero. the proofs are strong that she had not Sugar Rum Gum &c on board altho he John Martin received as he said \$4800 from Some underwriters for Cargo[.] Martin by falsehoods wants to divert public attention from himself. I do not know at present whether a publication of many affidavits in my possession would be right as Martin promised to bring forward the Captain for trial. I will shortly shew them to you.

I pretend to have done much good for this State. I believe I give good employ of public utility to more persons than any one man & unsupported by any person. I circulate much Specie and retain and make return to the planters what cash would otherways go Northward. In observing Martin or his Captain's rascality, I had no private Interest, but public good[.] Inform me if you please whether Shaw's [3] report is true, and if you have heard your Neighbors Speak of it. Mr. Ross or Mr. Leroy. Mr. Blount can only or chiefly be affected. I hope they will hardly credit such a report as I would suspect myself with all my pretensions to integrity as soon as either of them. excuse and believe me with true regards.

Dear Sir

Your obed^t Serv^t.

Arthur Jones

John Gray Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Washington

⁵¹ John Martin has not been identified.

William Shannon to [John Gray Blount]

Philad^a. . August 16. 1802

My dear Friend/

Yours of date the 4th instant I received this morning with some degree of Pleasure — I had no intention of leaving Washington so abruptly; notwithstanding my presence at home is very necessary: but a suspicion that the yellow fever had found its way here induced me to repair to the place of danger, and assist the weak in making if necessary an escape from the contagion. The fever is very moderate—I have not thought proper to remove my family as yet: but all business is at a stand and a larger proportion of the inhabitants are fled—I would not advise you to send Shingles here—the two feet are not used in this place & when inspected for exportation it is done by a sworn person and many of them are thrown out. The three feet is so plenty (owing I presume to the vast quantity that is making in the large dismal [swamp] near Norfolk) that they will answer little or no purpose — The person with whom I stored the shingles last sent, is fled from the City and as yet, I have no informati[on]* since I arrived at home from him, I fear they are not disposed of—as soon as I can see or hear from him, and any thing has transpired I will write you —

I have seen M^r Ball and hope I shall be able to prevent him doing any thing injurious, at least for some time—I am D Sir

Your Obed^t Servant
W^m Shannon

J. Gilpin⁵² to John Gray Blount

Alexandria 18th Aug^t. 1802 —

Jn^o. . Blount Esq^r.

Sir

Your favour of the 5th Inst. is now before me in which you say you heard that the man who piloted the Schooner Betsey from Washington was in jail in Boston[.] if this is the case it is more than I know of as no orders of that kind has ever been given nor could any legal process be issued to take him from

* Illegible.

⁵² Gilpin has not been identified. He was apparently a Virginia ship captain or small merchant or both.

there as a Slave, when we brought the pilot away it was not done through inclination but through necessity—We hailed a pilot Boat just out Side of the Bar & beg them to come a long side & take him off but they could not be prevailed on to come, the wind then freshened up & blew so heavy that it was impossible to land him in our Boat without endangering the lives of the Crew & the loss of the Vessel & Cargo[.] under those circumstances we were compelled to bring him off, on our arrival here he informed me he Wished to return I went & engaged him a passage on board of a vessel bound to your port but when the Vessel was ready to sail he declined going as he said he had Ship'd on Board a Vessel bound to the Northward, & as he had always told me he was free & I never was informed to the contrary till long after he had left this place I could not prevent him [2] from going where he thought it proper, You say if he is not return'd you will be paid the value of him I do not know by what means you will obtain it, as my brother nor myself think our Selves liable in the present case for any damages which the loss of this man may be to his Owner. If he should return here or to any place so that I can have him secured it Shall be done & I will have him sent on, this I would do as an act of friendship not that I have an idea that my brother or myself are any ways liable for him you will therefore act in this business, as you think proper.

I am Sir

Y^r. very Hum Serv^t.

J. Gilpin

P.S. He Shiped here on board a vessell belonging to Boston & bound for that Port & commanded by Peter Butler he then returnd here in the same vessell with Capt. Butler, after his return my father saw him on the Wharf & asked him if he did not mean to go back to Carolina to which he answered that he intended to make another trip to the Northward before he returned & as it was not known at that time that he was a Slave he was suffered to proceed on his Voyage, he was allowed Seamans wages from the day we left the bar untill the vessel was discharged in this place & the wages paid him

Y^{rs}.

J. G

Isaac Levi to B:G [John Gray] Blount [with enclosure]

Saint Pierre Martinique.

August 29 1802 —

B. G^[s]* Blunt.⁵³

Sir

Having established myself in this Island, as Broker and Commission Merchant; any transaction you may have in this line in Martinique, and which you may find necessary to intrust to my Care, shall always be attended to with every endeavour of mind to render satisfaction to promote your interest.

Dispatch of business and punctual payment has hitherto been my Guide, and chief, object from these circumstances alone I have gained public favour, and am now enabled to extend my Correspondance, and hope to deserve their esteem and confidence. — Our Market here is very fluctuating, there is either a very great Scarcity or a Glut, so that a stranger or any one who does not Constantly reside in this place may be very easily deceived. I have however inclose to you an Accurate Statement of our present prices Current, by which means you may know how and what to ship.

I am Sir

Your very humble servant,
Isaac Levi

[enclosure]

[2] PRICES CURRENT OF ALL AMERICAN PRODUCE.
BY ISAAC LEVI, Broker and Commission-Merchant.

	Doller. Cents		Doll. Cents
Beef, per barrel . . .	16	Smoaked Herrings	
	..16	in boxes	2
Pork, ditto	18	Pitch	3
Butter, per lb . . . . .	.12	Tar	3
Cheese, ditto . . . . .	.10	Turpentine	3
Hams, ditto . . . . .	.15	Rosin	3
Hogs Lard, ditto . . . . .	.15	Soap . . . . .	.10
Tongues, per half			
firkin	10	Candles Dip . . . . .	.12—

* Illegible.

⁵³ Probably an error. See Levi to Blount, June 9, 1802, n.29, in this volume.

	Doller. Cents		Doll. Cents
Superfine Flour	10	Mould	15 to 20—
Fine ditto	9.50—	Spermacite, ditto	50
Rye ditto	7	Horses	50
Corn meal	5	Mules	40
Corn	4	Jack asses	20
Rice	7	Oxen	50
Pilot Bread	7	Sheep	4 if good
Midlin ditto	5		
Ship Bread	4		
Tobacco	7		
Black eyed Peas	6		
Albany Peas	9		
White Beans	5		
Lumber, Pitch Pine	36		
White Pine	24		
Cypress Shingles	6		
White Pine, ditto	3		
Cod Fish	6		
Scale Fish	4		
Herrings	5		
Alewices	3		
Salmon per barrel	10		
Ditto per tierces	18		

Exports.

Muscovado Sugars	—*
Clayed, ditto	6
Tates	7
Coffee	18
Cocoa	12
Molasses	36 Sale
Rum	50 Cents
Cotton	3
Nankeen p ^r role	12
Bourdoun Chest	26

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarborough 30th Aug. 1802

Dear Sir,

It has afforded me infinite pleasure to hear of the recovery of your daughter Olivia. The account's I had of the State of your famliy's health & Reading's alarmed & distressed me exceedingly—indeed I was almost ready to conclude that the yellow fever must be amongst them. M^r Turner's second Letter, informing me that he had tried without Success to find purchasers for the Coffee & therefore could not receive it in payment, pressed me so hard to say that the debt should be paid at or before Halifax Court that I was constrained to promise payment on or before 1st. Nov. and at the time of making that promise I somewhat expected that Blake Baker, who has lately commenced merchant upon Schencks stock

* Illegible.

of Goods, would buy the Coffee—but he has declined doing so & I do not know that I can [se]ll* a pound of it [2] I must therefore sell negroes at what they will command or borrow money at any rate of Interest that may be asked for it, & I wish to know to what extent the one or the other must be done—or in other words what assistance I may reasonably expect from any Shipments or other arrangements made by you—It must however be remembered by us that the Debt at Raleigh *must* be paid about the same time. This promise has prevented my going to Warren for I cannot leave home, be the consequence of staying there what it may, until I shall clearly see how it is to be performed—I have said I must sell negroes or borrow—the latter I am not sure I can do—indeed I have but little hope of doing—and to effect the former I must necessarily be where the negroes are—Jackey joins in Love to your family

I am y^{rs}

Tho. Blount

Free

Addressed: [M]^{r†} John Gray Blount
Washington

[M]ail.†

John Strother to [John Gray Blount]

Morganton Sept^r. 5th 1802

Sir

I have Just had some conversation with Judge McCoy⁵⁴ on the Subject of the suit between Avery & myself, from what I have been able to collect from the Judges Observations, it appears to be a doubtful case with the Judge, whether The Establishment of Buncombe County authorised any Entry's to be made on the West side of Pigeon River or not,⁵⁵ and if not—there is no Law authorising an Entry to be made on the West side of the river—of course, neither Avery's or mine are Legal, and an Office never has been opened for them Lands—An interference of the General Assembly are expected, and what [2] the Issue may be if

* Hole in manuscript.

† Manuscript torn.

⁵⁴ Possibly Judge Spruce McCay of Rowan County, one of the judges of the Superior Courts of Law and Equity since 1790. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 384.

⁵⁵ See John Strother to Blount, August 16, 1801, in this volume.

things takes this turn, is uncertain—I feel extremely uneasy at the prospect—I believe I will again Enter in sundry cases, and not come forward this fall prepared to take out grants as I expected to have done previous to this Information from the Judge—your Opinion will be greatly received, and a government to my proceedings.—

Since the New purchase in Georgia⁵⁶ I have been favoured with the bounds—it will imbrace that part of the Country where the line of Jacob Blounts land lies [.] what disposition the next Assembly will make as respects the old continental Titles situate as that is, remains doubtful, but I think it be favourable to them—Col^o. Harris Informs me that he is in possession [3] of some of the Lands I contracted to him last spring— & says he hopes to be able to give a good Account of them by Next Christmast—I have made no sales in Buncombe of any consequence this summer—the lands are increasing in Value, and the Want of money the cause generally of not making sales—I'll be in Raleigh in November at which time I hope to give you a more full account of myself than at present—

Please present my compliments to M^{rs} Blount & family, and other friends—

I am with sentiments of respect as Usial y^r. M^o Ob^t H^{ble} Serv^t

John Strother

Where is Price, and what in gods name is he doing with the Map.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ One of the terms of the "Georgia Compact" of April 24, 1802, between the United States and Georgia was that the former would extinguish the Indian title to land in that State. As a first step, the United States on June 16, 1802, concluded the Treaty of Fort Wilkinson with the Creek Indians by which the Indians ceded two strips of land to Georgia, one along the western bank of the Oconee River and the other extending from the Otemaha River to the southern border of the State. R. S. Cotterill, "Georgia Compact," in James Truslow Adams (ed.), *Dictionary of American History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons [Second Edition, revised], 5 volumes and index, 1942), II, 381; Charles C. Royce, *Indian Land Cessions in the United States*, Volume II of *The Eighteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, edited by J. W. Powell (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899), 660-662; Coulter, *Georgia, A Short History*, 218.

⁵⁷ For Price and Strother's map see David Allison to Blount, January 21, 1796, n.33; and February 18, 1796, n.53, in this volume.

*Benjamin Smith to John Gray Blount*Orton⁵⁸ 8th Sept^r: 1802—

Dear Sir

By waiting for an answer to my letter desiring from our Sheriff the amount of your Taxes for 1801 & that He would not advertise your Land I have been delayed in returning you my sincere thanks for your candour & information respecting Cap^t: Eastwood & Shipbuilding—Smiths not coming appears to have put a Stop to further attempts at the business—I offered the old Man My Chair & an Horse if He would go to Beaufort or further North & seek proper Workmen but He was in constant expectation of his Brig Charlotte he could not be absent—Since which nothing further has passed I am not much inclined to build so large a Vessel, but being anxious to procure one or two large Schooners have written to Philadelphia in hopes of procuring a Workman—That you may not think [2] me crazy about Vessel building—I will tell you my plan—I have one Mill going & 4 more very fine Seats on three of which the Dams are already made. I only wait to procure a good Millright (*which I want very much*) to put up as fast as I can—I am just setting about a Cargo Wharf at Smithville by way of gaining knowledge How to build one of 250 ft^t: front in Charleston Whither or to the West Indies as shall appear most profitable & least troublesome, I propose keeping my Schooner constantly running—So far Self only appears, but it is also by way of preface to ask You whether You have to build Wharves on Salt Water? & if you have, whether you build of Palmetto Logs? For at Smithville & to the Southward the Worms soon destroy any other Wood—Wharfbuilding was one of my objects for my Southern Jaunt—Another Cotton—3^d Tabby Work⁵⁹—I scarcely understand what information you want respecting [3] Cotton except the management of it; or, as to Tabby work that will be necessary in time for this Season—If however you think otherwise I will most cheerfully return the favor you have done me by writing you very fully on both immediately otherwise shall reserve particulars to meet & explain most fully at Newbern Superior Court—For your present Satisfaction however I with pleasure inform you that Tabby work is *by far* the most cheap method of building I know *if* the S[hell

⁵⁸ Benjamin Smith's plantation home in Brunswick County, 18 miles from Wilmington. Robinson, *North Carolina*, 266.

⁵⁹ Tabby is a mixture of lime, sand, shell, and water, which becomes rock-like when dry.

is]* Easy to be had—It is certainly very durable if the Materials be well mixed & the most elegant 3 Story House on a 6 ft: Foundation I ever built of it at Beaufort in S: Carolina—It is 48 x 42 ft: with beau[bow?] windows⁶⁰ extending ———† front 64 ft: The Person who built it usually contracted in that Country where the prices of everything are high at 9^d per Square foot finding *all Materials* The method has become so fashionable that He has more work than He can do & has rais'd the price—I will write to you soon after I hear from the Sheriff interim excuse this coarse paper & believe me with Great Regard

D^r Sir Y^{rs} Benja^a Smith

Free

Addressed: John G Blount Esqr
Washington
N^o: Carolina

Post]

Nicholas Newell⁶¹ to John Gray Blount

Brig Sally Sep^{ter} 9th

Mr John G Blount Esqr

Sir you desired me to Send The boat on the First Day of the quarentine to let you know the State of the crew which is as healthey as men need desire to be and the Vessel has been well cleans'd in every respect and I make no doubt but that you think there is not the least danger of letting us come to town[.] the Vessel is under very heavy expenc daily and has been own'd by a widow[.] under the distressing circumstances M^{rs} Howard labours under ought to influence the mind of every Gentleman, when there is not the least danger of any infectious disorder on board of her and the terms of the quarentine been discretionary with you[;] to save as much expencs as possible for her sake you have kindly indeavour'd to limit the quarrentine to six day and perhaps by your stating the case to those two Gentlemen you

* Obscured by seal.

⁶⁰ Bow window. A projecting window or group of windows, the wall beneath which extends to the ground, and the face of which is an arc in the plan. Henry H. Saylor, *Dictionary of Architecture* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1952), 24.

† Illegible.

⁶¹ A ship captain of Philadelphia. See Frederick Statt to Blount, October 15, 1802, in this volume.

mentioned may induce them to allow the quarrentine to be taken of to day which will very much oblige your Most Obed^t

Humble Ser^t

Nicholas Newell

Please to send one Gallon of good Spirits by the boate

Addressed: John G. Blount Esq^r

Washington

Willie Blount to John Gray Blount

Nashville Sept^r. 12th 1802

Dear Sir,

I have been here the most of the Summer that is in this district attending to your lands, Gen^l. Robertson has been twice to look for the 7200 acre tract granted to you assignee of John Patten and has not yet sufficiently satisfied himself of the beginning tho' from the information he got when he was up last he doubts not of success when he goes up again which will be soon—Cap^t. Hardeman is willing to buy that tract if the price can be agreed on after the beginning is clearly ascertained—the price I have never mentioned in fact not knowing either the land or the value of lands in that neighborhood—One or two tracts of land now owned by you was returned for the direct tax in the names of the grantees and was sold[.] I have redeemed that granted to Robert Calf and that granted to Walter Allen[,], they being two of the tracts sold and I shall redeem that granted to Jesse Shute—I wrote you in March last it would be proper for you & [Edward] Harris to send me to a power for the special purpose of redeeming lands of yours sold for the direct tax but I have never gotten it—I have acted under your general power perhaps in cases of contest it [2] would be proper for you and Harris to execute a power and Send me—those which I have redeemed was done in July early and your power can look to the date of my letter in March on that subject which you may have forwarded but I have not received—M^{rs}. Ragsdale is desirous to have Walter Allen's tract in part of the land to be conveyed to Col Love, there is a man living on that tract who is desirous to purchase it—If Col. Love will come out this fall I shall endeavor to get that business closed it has so happened that he and I have never been out here

together—Shortly after my return to Knoxville from Carolina I addressed a letter agreeably to your request to Mess^{rs}. Donelsons which they say they never received not hearing from them in answer to mine I intended when I was about to start from Knoxville last to have brought your letters to me on that subject & thought I had put them up with other papers I was bringing on but did not as I find by perusing such as I brought[;]therefore have not said any thing of terms to them not recollecting exactly the proposal, I have told M^r William Donelson I would write him on my return home, he is about to go to Richmond in Virginia and if he can find time he says he will try and see you at Washington before he returns—I am told that between three and four thousand acres of the two 3 5000 acre tracts granted to you & Tom will be taken by a M^r. Gill's land, of Greenville County—Allison I have been informed mortgaged Duck river land to a Norton or a Norton Prior,⁶² and since I have been out here I have understood that that mortgage was foreclosed in the federal Court and the land by the Marsh[al]*[.] I never could get your judgment satisfied by levying execution on those lands it not being known whether they were within the limits of any of our Counties & your recovery was in the State Court—I believe Judge [Andrew] Jackson purchased those lands at the Marshal's sale perhaps as agents for Nor[ton]†[Prior]*—I have never had any conversation with him [on that Subject?]*—ur law says that execution shall not be—— on lands lying within the Indian boundary—Please say compliments to your good lady & family and believe me to be

Yours in affection
Willie Blount

John Gray Blount Esq^r.

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^r.
Washington
North Carolina

Hand by
Major Tatum

⁶² Allison had mortgaged 85,000 acres of land in Tennessee to a Philadelphia merchant named Norton Prior, who had the mortgage foreclosed by a Tennessee court and purchased it at the marshal's sale. Jackson got some of the land in partial payment of Allison's \$20,000 debt to him. The titles to all the land later proved defective, once again plunging Allison's estate into chaos. Willie to John Gray Blount, October 18, 1800, in this volume; Bassett, *Correspondence of Jackson*, I, 114, 189; II, 427-428.

* Manuscript torn.

† Obscured by seal.

James Moss to John Gray Blount [with enclosures]

Nassau Sept^r: 13 1802

John Gray Blount Esq^r.

Dear Sir.

I am induced from our Mercantile Connection formerly—and for your particular attention to the True Blue Business When under Seizure[,] to open a trade to your place—and intend employing a Vessell constantly provided it can be done to Advantage, And I now commence by sending the Schooner Alert—John Mason—Master—to your Address, with an assorted Cargo. as P Invoice & Bill of Lading Inclosed—Amounting to £371. 2. 6—Cur— equal to Doll^s. . and which I hope will arrive to a good Market—and as despatch is Absolutely Required—for to enable a Vessell to pay her expences these times, you will Oblige me by sending the Alert back to this place with an Assorted Cargo—as—p^r Abstract herewith or as near thereto as may be convenient[,] let every Article be of the best, please to inform Mr. Jno Moss Merch Liverpool of her Arrival and time of Sailing—Insurance having been ordered on her—Should you have declined Business I wish you to give the preference of this Consignment to Mr. W^m Ross— who is Acquainted with my Connections in Liverpool. Cap^t Mason is a stranger in the Business he is now engaged in—therefore I rely on your enforcing the Dispatch requird in which I expect he will render any Assistance——If the Lignum Vita— ——* is Sold— I will thank you for Acc^t Sales thereof, — being anxious to close that Adventure—

I remain

Dear Sir respectfully

Your Most Ob^t Sert.

James Moss

If its not attended with any

Inconveniency—I will thank you to send me

6 Vension Hams. 6 ash cured pork Hams & 6 Bags

Oysters

[enclosure]

Invoice of Cargo shipped by James Moss on board the Schooner Alert John Mason Master for Washington North Carolina on

* Illegible.

acct. & Risque of the Shipper & consigned to John Grey Blount
Esquire Merchant there. Viz^t.

Fifteen hogsheads Molasses			
con ^{ts} . 1665 Gallons @ 2/6		203	..2.. 6
A quantity of old Junk			
weighig 1800	50/-	45.	..—
Sixty Muskets	16/-	48.	..—
Five hundred Bushells			
Salt	3/-	75.	..—
		<hr/>	
		£371	2 6

Errors Excepted

Nassau September 13th. 1802
James Moss

[enclosure]*

Shipped, by the Grace of God, in good Order and well conditioned, by *James Moss* in and upon the good *schooner* called the *Alert* whereof is Master, under God, for this present Voyage, *John Mason* and now riding at Anchor in the *harbor of Nassau* and bound for *Washington* to say, *fifteen hogshead Molasses a Quantity of old Junk sixty Muskets & five hundred Bushells Salt* being marked and numbered as in the Margin, and are to be delivered in the like good Order and well-conditioned at the afore-said Port of *Washington* (the Act of God, the King's Enemies, Fire, and all and every other Dangers and Accidents of the Seas, Rivers and Navigation, of whatever Nature and Kind soever, save Risk of Boats, so far as Ships are liable thereto, excepted) unto *John Gray Blount* or to *his* Assigns, freight for the said Goods not his owners Property with Primage and Average accustomed. In Witness whereof the said Master of the said Ship hath affirmed to *four* Bills of Lading, all of this Tenor and Date: the One of which *four* Bills being accomplished, the other *three* to stand void. And so God send the good Ship to her desired Port in Safety. Amen. Dated in *Nassau N. P. Sept 13th. 1802*

Jn^o Mason

* Words in italics handwritten; the rest is a printed form.

[enclosure]

Abstract for an Assorted Cargo—to be Shipped on Board the Schooner Alert John Mason Master for Nasau New Providence—on Acc^t & James Moss—Esq^r.

300 Bushells Corn—

25 Bu'lls—Black Eyd Pease—

20 Bu'lls—Red Corn d^o.—

20 half Tierces Rice—if reasonable—

5^m. Inch—Boards—

5^m Inch & quarter D^o.

3^m 1 ½ In plank

3^m 2 In—D^o—

} to be choice Lumber

2^m feet Scantling

2^m D— Joist—

2^m Rafters—

} Small seized—and good Length

4 doz: Ash Oars—Assorted— frm 14 to 18 feet dressed—

2 Oak ——* — suitable for Keel & Kilson of a Vessell }
40 feet long }

10 Bulls potatoes,

15 Bulls—Pitch—

15 — D— Tarr^s/

10 head Milch Cows—for my own plantation.

10 —fatt stears—

30 head D^o. . Sheep—

30 do —— Hogs ——

} fitting for the market

20^{ft}. . Laths—for plastering on—

a few Coops—Geese Ducks—Turkeys & ——*

2 Hhds—Tobacco—

Nassau New Providence

September. 13.th 1802

James Moss

If the above Articles do not

fill the Vessell—please

to compleat—with Inch Boards }

Addressed: John Grey Blount Esq^r

Mercht

Washington

North Carolina

* Illegible.

*Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount*Tarborough 28th Sep^r. 1802

Dear Sir,

I want for myself & Mr^s. Gerrard, to whom I am indebted, a Bag of Coffee, Say 150 to 200^{lb}, & a Barrel of Sugar of best quality; and will thank you to purchase them for me at the sale that is to take place Tomorrow, if they shall sell as low, on a credit of 6 months, as you may think they ought. I would if it were convenient attend the sale—but We have had continual rain for several days & the River is rising so fast that I apprehend the —Journey would be attended with great difficulty & some danger to my health, which is now perfectly good & I wish to keep it so—besides I am engaged in training my horse Splinter to run at Halifax for a purse of \$333 $\frac{1}{3}$, hoping that after winning that, I shall be able to sell him for \$666 $\frac{2}{3}$, and my principal Groom being sick, my continuance at home is [2] absolutely necessary—I know you will consider this a slim chance for \$1000—&, circumstanced as I am, I confess it is too slim to afford me entire satisfaction yet it is the best, if not the only one, I have, for no person that has money will lend it, or vest it in Land or negroes at any prices, as I know by experience having for weeks past, daily offerd both at low prices—the fact is I know not a man in this County (the Merchants, who are all now starting Northwardly, excepted) who can command cash to amount of \$1000—and I am therefore more concerned at having pledged my word to Turner than you can well imagine. for if my Racing scheme should succeed, & I am not without hope that it will, the cash will not be composed in time to fulfill the engagement—I hope you have shipped the Coffee & Rum, or made some other disposition of them, that will ensure the getting of cash to their amount—I Shall continue my exertions to borrow as long as I can hear of an acquaintance that is possessed of \$50 & am not without hope that I [3] may raise by loans of that sort 100 or £150 but more I cannot calculate on. It has afforded us great pleasure to hear that your family & Reading's are recovering their health[.] Jackey Suffered much last night & today by the tooth ache, but is otherwise quite well, & desires to be remembered to you & all your family—tell my Sister that Mr Toole, his daughter, & many of his negroes have been sick, but are recovering. our

Town has been healthy, but there are many people sick in the neighbourhood—The weather has now, & for some days past has had [an]* appearance, which makes me fear ——* damage has been sustained on the sea coast. If you have leisure let me hear from you by the return of Mr Stewart on the subjects first mentioned—present my best wishes to Your family Readings, & Sukeys—I am

as usual

Yours

Tho. Blount

Addressed: Mr John Gray Blount
Washington

Mr R. Stewart.

William Ross to John Gray Blount

Cape Francois 4th. Oct^r. 1802

Jn^o. Gray Blount Esq^r.

My dear Sir,

I should have communicated to you such information as in my power from hence previous to this were it not from a belief you was at the Castle to which place I have wrote by several opportunities. Cap^t. Rogers arrived here a few days since and informed me that owing to the unfortunate situation of your Family you are still at Washington, believe me when I say, I most sincerely sympathize with you, your loss⁶³—Cap^t. R—proceeded for Jam^a. it being impossible to sell here, neither [Captain] Lingo[’s] or any other Vessel have arriv’d that intended for this Port &c they cannot have done worse let them have gone where they may—prices of our produce as below—

The restricted state of commerce at present in the Cape is enough to deter any adventurers; we have not had an arrival from the Continent in six days [2] a circumstance very uncommon since my arrival until that period; One hundred and ninety Americans have come in since ourselves out of which numbers one hundred and ten have gone down to Leeward—one or two French Ships containing from 3 to 500 Troops drop in weekly which are by no means sufficient to ensure success,⁶⁴ the mortal-

* Obscured by seal.

⁶³ See Thomas to John Gray Blount, July 24, 1802, n.46, in this volume.

⁶⁴ In the French attempt to take Hispaniola from the armies of Toussaint L’Ouverture. Burns, *History of the British West Indies*, 580-581.

ity on shore exceeds that number and unless more should arrive shortly I do not know what will be the situation of the Town, every little Village and plantation on the plain is daily destroy'd by fire, last Evening it approach'd close to the Shores of the Bay; all the Troops are order'd from Town and the Citizens put under arms for its protection and they still have not a sufficiency of men to protect their lines—Last week a Tax was impos'd on the Inhabitants of the Cape to raise One hundred thousand Dollars for the payment of the Troops, it has given great offence, but remonstrance to a military government will avail them nothing it appears they are determined to grasp at whatever the Fire has left—One half is to [3] be paid down, the other half in sixty days. The Citizens are devided into a number Classes, the Americans and other foreign Merchants are *complimented* as of the 1st., and pay Seven hundred Dollars—

By a late arreté of Gen^l. Le Clerc⁶⁵ the exports in Foreign bottoms are limited to Coffee and a few dye woods for which the N^o. Carolinians have little use[.] money is not to be taken away, under penalty of a confiscation of Vessel and Cargo—Within these few days the people appear determin'd to keep all they have and part with nothing which has put me under the necessity of commencing suit against the purchasers of both the Sally and Olivia's Cargo's, I am promis'd a speedy Judgement, but many occurances may intervene to retard it—present my best respects to M^{rs} B— and your family

and believe me

Yours assuredly

William Ross

Fredrick Statt⁶⁶ to John Gray Blount

Philadelphia October 15th. 1802

Dear Sir

I embrace this oppertunety to rite to you by hearing of your respectfull Carrector tho not having the Pleasure of your acquaintance

Sir I Should be Veray Much obeledge to you if you will take So much truble make Inquirerre for me whether Cap^t. Necklos

⁶⁵ General Charles Victor Emmanuel Leclerc, brother-in-law of Napoleon, commanding general of the French forces. Larousse, *Grande Dictionnaire Universel du XIX^e Siecle*, X, 299.

⁶⁶ Statt has not been identified.

Newell ⁶⁷ has ben in your Port anay time Since the first of September [.] iff he is there he Com in a brig from Cape francis by the Name of the Sally of Washington [.] iff he has been there I wood thank you if you wood rite me & Let me No whether he is there or wheare he is gon

I hav ben Looking for him now going on 2 months [.] he has Sold My Vessel & Carg att the Cape & has not rote to me anay thing about what he has don or wheather he means to com hom or no Which Leves me Veray Much Dissattisfide With him [.] he has a Wife & familay hear [;] they Seame to be much in Truble about him [2] NB

Sir I Shall take it as a pertickler favour if you will make Inquirre for me & rite to me Sune as Convent at Philad^a. South Worvs

Rope Maker & Ship
Chandler N^o: 26

from your Most Obedent & humble Servent

Fredreck Statt

Post Pade heare

Addressed: Messrs John.G. Blunte
Merchant
North Carolina
Washington

Richard Lake to Thomas Blount

Kingston Jamaica Oct. 25th. 1802.

Thomas Blunt Esqr.

Dear Sir/.

Having unhappily lost both my Nephews that were connected with me in the American Business, by the malignant effects of the yellow Fever, the Cruel & fatal Enemy to all newly arrived Europeans;—I still am anxious to try to substitute some of my young Relation's in that Establishment, by naming me or men with myself, w^h. I shall do immedeately after the Termination of the Year & shall advise you thereof.—

⁶⁷ See Nicholas Newell to Blount, September 9, 1802, in this volume.

I seize the oppertunity of our Mutual frend Capt. Gorham, to make this my intentions known to you, as being one of my oldest & most esteemed correspondents & to tender my best Services to you & your Friends in any Business you may have to transact in this Country. I shall be greatly indebted by your forwarding [2] this present & naming my House here to your valuable Friends in America.—

I was much concerned to hear by Capt. Gorham that my Friend Jacob Blunt was Dead,—I have lately recovered out of the pro[vost?]. Marshals office of this Island, the Debt due from the Exec^r. of Edward Eccleston Dec^d. w^h. I put in Suit, for my late Friend Mr. Jacob Blunt so long ago as 1799—the Amo^t. exceeds Two Hundred pounds this money w^h. & I shou'd now have sent by Capt. Gorham but was unacquainted to whom I cou'd forward it—It shall be remitted to any person authorised to receive it, & in any manner directed.—May I trouble you to advise me in this particular

We have had of late an abundant supply of all American Articles & Capt. Gorham will inform you that the prices are low in consequence—Shou'd this discourage Speculation, the prices will be high after Xmas—after a Feast comes a Famine—this is often verified in the West Indies, and is what shou'd [3] be attended to by Merch^s. adventuring hither—I am with the highest respect D^r. Sir.

Your mo. obliged & Obed. Serv^t.
R. Lake

Addressed: Thomas Blount Esquire
Tarborough
North Carolina

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarborough 30th Oct^o. 1802

Dear Sir,

Mr Niles, by declining to come up & make the machinery for my Cotton Gin, has put me to great inconvenience—there is not a man in this part of the Country who is capable of making it without the help of an Instructor, & I am therefore extremely anxious to get [Thomas?] Topping up immediately to work on

my mill that I may receive the Benefit of his advice—The inclosed Letter to him is left open for your perusal—please seal & forward it by the mail unless you should know of a quicker & more safe conveyance. I write by this mail to Sharpe requesting him to endeavor to get Adams to come up & do the machinery for the Gin, but am fearful he will not succeed— & if he should, I had rather have Topping here while the work is going on to assist with his advice—I can command the services of a millwright in this neighbourhood, but he does not seem to have a correct Idea of such Business & I do not like to depend on him.—My Gin maker says he can give him all necessary directions, but as he acknowledges himself incapable of doing the work, & is a stranger, it is at least, prudent to doubt the truth of his asertion—He assures me that he can, & will, if I require it, make you such a Gin as you want & at as low a price as you can get such a one elsewhere—But, as you have been once disappointed, I will not advise you to depend on him if you are sure that [2] you can get one that will please you of the man at New Bern—If you cannot get one at New Bern, let me know it, & if he proves a good workman, he shall begin one for you the moment after he completes mine⁶⁸—I go to Halifax Tomorrow morning—& from there shall go to M. Whitaker's⁶⁹ to run out my Land near his House & sell such parts of it as are wanted by his neighbours. We are all well & very glad to hear that you & your family are getting so—accept & offer our congratulations.

I am

as usual

Yours

Tho. Blount

Free

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^{re}
Washington

Mail.

⁶⁸ The Blounts at this time had become very interested in cotton gins and Thomas had one in operation by January of the next year. Thomas to John Gray Blount, February 15, December 18, 1802, in this volume; Thomas to John Gray Blount, January 9, 12, 1803, in John Gray Blount Papers.

⁶⁹ There were many Whitakers in Halifax, the most prominent of whom was Mathew C. Whitaker, who had 55 slaves and served in the House of Commons in 1798, 1800, and 1802-1806, and in the State Senate in 1807-1810, 1812. *Second Census: 1800, Halifax County; Wheeler, Sketches*, II, 203.

*John Gaylard to John Gray Blount*Broad Creek [Beaufort County] 4th Nov.. 1802—Mr. . John G Blount Esq^r

Dear Sir, I wish to know of you if the Iron work for this mill is ready or not, as we now are ready to put her down, and wa[i]ting for the Iron work &C And, I also want to know wheather it has been in your power or not to purcure for us two good Mill Saws & Som files as we Shall want them very much to com down with the Iron & your Bill Shall be puntucly paid—and also Ile thank you to pay for us the Smiths Bill and it Shall be paid as above—James Paretrus has taken down for you, and from me two Loads of 22 Inch Shingles to the Castle—and now have two Loads more, and maybe three but uncertain—the first Load he cared, 32,265 and the next he carred down 30th D^o—he is at present goon as I hear to Wilmington—your attention & Compliance to the above will very much Oblige your Ob^t..

&V H Servant

John Gaylard

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington

*Benjamin Smith to John Gray Blount*Belvedere 4th.. Nov: 1802—

Dear Sir/

A droll circumstance has happened in which I must crave your assistance—An honest man by his Letter several years back from England had claimed me for his Brother—After a long Interval part of which I employed at the assembly in Inquiries for an Emigrant of the name of Benj Smith—I wrote to him assigning as a motive that as He appeared to think I was his Brother & neglected him because He heard I was in good Circumstances I thought for the Honor of human nature I ought to undeceive him—That We were for upward of a Century past an american Family That neither my brother or Self had ever been out of america—But that altho^h not his Brother if he would come out & [behave?]* himself well & skilfully in his calling, I could assist him—That this was a fine foreman's Country & that Ship Carpenters of all other People got (for their rank) rich fastest—That I would also give land to any of his family that chose to come out & be of what service I could Conveniently But that neither He or any of them nor any of the [2] Mechanics I

wrote for must come out till I was acquainted with their expectations, Wages & every particular was &c told by answer from me—Instead of their Believeing it impossible that an utter Stranger could make such friendly offers & that like Joseph I conceald myself till his arrival Then to fall on his Neck & weep over my long lost Brother—He has just _____* sent over a man to Superentend not to work at my wished for Establishment of a Ship yard, (before any body to work had arrived) who asked me 600 Drs: p^r acc^t & I have this after noon received a letter from his Daughter informing me that [her]† self Husband & Child had arrivd at Baltimore, were about sailing immediately for Washington, requesting I would write to meet her there directing to the care of M^r: James Redmans & some money to help her on—The latter part I feel less concerned for than the Disappointment that must happen as She concludes her letter by subscribing my affectionate Niece—I write to prepare her for it & beg for Charity sake you will convince her—I also must add a request that you will answer any demands so far as is consistent with a decent mode of travelling or Expences for coming to [3] Washington & continue them on to me—If no other way offers immediately send them to H Bryan at New bern & mention my Request that He could send them on in one of the Stages there[.] This I suppose will bring Baggage & all[?] this[?] for [he] kept one by which he formerly sent me Bruce[?] & his tools—To answer this Expence I must inform you that —* [passing?] money in our Sheriffs hands He informed me this day that He _____* your Taxes due being for the 60 _____* 8^dp^rhund^d public & 8^d County Tax if I calculate [righ]t† £40 — Therefore I hope my aff^e: Niece to whom a — [is inc]losed† will not suffer on her landing & travel in NCar[olina]† My Brother that *will* be is a Shipwright in the Kings Yard at Sheerness & has worked at the Trade for many years—but cannot draft—As the fine gentleman He sent me has returned to Charleston to fetch his Wife or do better if He can & I do not much expect him back I will be very thankful to you for looking out for a man that can mould & head Shipbuilding as I still think of establishing a Ship Yard at Smithville with my Brother & 3 other whites from England who wish to come out with him & 6 or 8 Blacks [;] but I hope the said Man altho' the Moulder of Vessels will not be above

* Illegible.

† Obscured by seal.

working himself—If the whole of the 80 Drs be not necessary as much as They require can be given them & the rest inclosed—I suppose if a later [4] Conveyance could be had it would be best—but to you I leave all due attention to my affectionate Niece & remain with much Regard

Dr Sir &C

Benj Smith: jr

Addressed: Free John G. Blount Esqre

Post-Master

Washington

Post]

William Shannon to John Gray Blount

John Gray Blunt

Philad^a Nov^r 5th 1802.

Bot of Cath & Roberts

1/2 Bushel Red Clover Seed at 8/	4.
1/2 Bushel Heards Grass Seed "2.50	1.25
2 Bags	60
	<hr/>
	\$5.85

Received Payment^t

Rob^t W. Mim

The Soil most suitable for the production of Red Clover is what we generally term upland where it is not liable to be injured by Standing water Ten pounds is the proper quantity to be sown on an acre, it may be Sown on wheat or Rye or Barley in the month of February March or April without Harrowing also with Spring grain after it is covered in and ——* the ground quite smooth sow your Clover Seed the quantity above mention'd to the acre then go once over it with a light Harrow which will be Sufficient The most Swampy land is the most suitable for the production of Heards grass, the Spring Season of the year the most proper time for it to be Sown and Six quarts the proper quantity for an acre

D Sir agreeably to your request of date 20th September ulto, I have employed a Confidential person to look out for your Negroes, and a Stone Cutter to dress the Stones under the direction of a

* Manuscript torn.

House Carpenter—Thank God our fever is over, and I sincerely hope your family are relieved from their distresses—In our State all is republican

In haste With much esteem I am
Your very Hb^e Servant
W^m Shannon

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington
North Carolina
Cap^t Roberson

Seldon Jasper⁷⁰ to John Gray Blount

Nov^r 8 — 1802

At the Swash on board the Nancy

Dear Sir

This is the 8 day I have been at this place owing to Strong gales & no lighter (in Short I have been on the wrong tack some weeks) I had a wish you Should say something to Mr. Collins should you conceive It necessary [...] I instructed Mr. Harris to bring suit on a note I left in Mr. Ja^s. Bryant Possession for 2025\$ with Interest from June last which sums will nearly pay the debt to Mr. Collins & Schimmerhorn the two sums about 2177\$ [...] Should I fail in paying earlier which I hope will not be the case should Schemmerhorn write you on the payment of the debt due him by me you can give him such Information as you are in possession of. I am dear Sir with the highest Respect your Most

humble Serv^t. Sel Jasper

N.B. I left a Scow at durhams Creek⁷¹ with Mr. Crawfurds promise to put Boards sufficient In her to list her [...] Sip [?] is at Washington who will do It Immediately [...] when done If she

⁷⁰ A slaveowner of Hyde County. He served in the House of Commons in 1798. Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 213; *Second Census: 1800*, Hyde County.

⁷¹ In Beaufort County, downstream from Washington and on the south side of the Pamlico River.

can be Sold for 150\$ you may take It other wise Convert her to your use when you want her after that hire If you can

Sel Jasper

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarb^o. 10th. Nov. 1802

Dear Sir,

I met Mr. Turner at Halifax & paid him in full—but I am still under embarrassment—I owe \$500 that I borrowed payable at Christmas & Ross & Parker⁷² have a Judgt. against me for about the same sum to be paid at our next Court which is now close at hand—the latter I believe I can provide for by a sale of notes that I shall get next week, for Lands that I have sold in Halifax—apropos—My 1920 acres of Land there will measure nearly or quite 3000—and instead \$3000 w^h. I lately offered them at to M. Whitaker, I expect I shall sell, by cutting into small pieces, & giving some credit, for nearly or quite \$7000—I sold 443 acres pay^{ble}. Jan.^y 1804 with Int. from Jan.^y 1803, for 1191 $\frac{1}{3}$ Dollars—the purchasers, 5 in number, all good as the U.S. Bank—If Reading has obtained possession of the Cash he is to pay for Topping I wil^l thank him to send it to me by Mr Schenck—how have you provided or can you provide for the Raleigh business? for that, I have from necessity & your observation relied wholly on you—I need not remind you that there is an absolute necessity for punctuality there.⁷³

If I can rub through my present pecuniary difficulties, I think I shall afterwards remain at ease—My Gin man turns out even worse than I expected—no dependence [2] can be put in him—Can I get a Gin from your New Bern man? Topping is here & going on with the machinery for turning a Gin by a Horse— & a Gin I must have—I am sure it will be greatly profitable—Reading has a Book of mine wrote by Oliver Evans upon mills⁷⁴ &

⁷² Merchants of Tarboro. See John Wallace to Blount, December 2, 1797, in this volume.

⁷³ The "Raleigh business," guardedly referred to at times by Thomas, was possibly a debt owed Treasurer John Haywood for the use of State funds. See Thomas to John Gray Blount, August 30, December 18, 1802; David Allison to Blount, February 13, 1796; and William Blount to John Haywood, May 28, 1796, in this volume.

⁷⁴ A popular book on the construction and operation of mills. Oliver Evans, *The Young Mill Wright & Millers Guide* (Philadelphia: Oliver Evans, 1795).

Topping wishes much to have a view of it—I wish therefore that you could send for it & send it to me by Mr Schenck. Nancy Toole⁷⁵ has been very ill but is much better—the rest of us are all well & send Comp^{ts}. & all that to you & yours—

I am
Yr. Mo. Ob—
Tho. Blount

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esq^{re}
Washington
Mr Schenck.

Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount

Tarborough 15th. Nov. 1802

Dear Sir,

I have rec^d. your Letters by Mr [Henry] Ellison & Mr [John] Schenck—the latter containing the Things therein expressed—the Exchange Bank Bills I disposed of to Mr Marsh for Currency & Silver—and I have sold three Lottery Tickets—the other Things I shall dispose of rightly—The exact Balance due is £298—and I must try & settle it; but how I know not, for R[oss]. & P[arker].’s Judgment is pressing hard upon me & there is yet \$36 due [James] Turner which he took my word for & entered satisfaction in the Docket—I wrote E[dward?]. H[arris?]. as you requested, & told him that I *wished not* to be a Candidate; but was strongly importuned to be so by persons whom I did not well know how to refuse—and therefore held myself at liberty to be so or not, as I should hereafter determine with the advice of my particular friend—We hear of many Candidates for Governor—viz^t. [Will] Polk, [John B.] Ashe, [Alexander] Martin, Reddick,⁷⁶ Jo. Taylor⁷⁷—& some say Ja^s. Turner but that I do not believe—he mentioned nothing of it to me at Halifax but expressed himself anxious for the election of Ashe—I expect J Steele resignd his Comptrollership with an expectation of

⁷⁵ Anne Blount Toole, daughter of William Blount, and the wife of Henry Toole, Jr., of Edgecombe County.

⁷⁶ Joseph Riddick, of Gates County, was almost constantly a member of the General Assembly from 1781 to 1817, serving 33 times, 11 of them as Speaker of the State Senate. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 190.

⁷⁷ John Lewis Taylor, of Fayetteville, served in the House of Commons in 1792, 1794, and 1795; he was Superior Court judge, 1798-1818, and Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court from 1818 to his death in 1829. Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 331.

being Governor⁷⁸ but I have not heard that he is a Candidate—Bythal Bell on Saturday last died & his death, which I should at any time have lamented, may put me to some [2] inconvenience as upon a pinch I know I could have borrowed some money of him if he had lived—I shall go Tomorrow to Halifax County Court to deliver Deeds & take notes for the Land I sold in that County and immediately after our Court is over (which comes on next week) I intend going to Raleigh where my attendance as a Trustee⁷⁹ is currently requested I suppose to assist in the drawing of the Lottery in part—Jackey has a violent cold & complains much of pain in the head & Eyes—My sister & myself are well—we all Join in love &c. to your family & Readings—pray urge Reading to send [Thomas] Topping's money up if he has collected, or can collect it,⁸⁰ by the meeting of our Court—I am

as usual

Yours

Tho. Blount

Free

Addressed: John Gray Blount, Esq^{re}.
Washington

Mail.

Willie Blount to John Gray Blount

Knoxville Nov^r. 19th 1802

Dear Sir,

I have by a letter of recent date forwarded by Doctor Dickson informed you of a melancholy event which has happened here, the death of my sister⁸¹ of a complaint called the Jaundice, which letter I trust you have received—I now only have time to acknowledge the receipt of your letters by Mr. Armstrong and by post; the last received was this evening of the 24th Oct^{er}.—It is now nearly 12 O'Clock at night, and Mr. Armstrong's early start from here in the morning together with my want of Sleep owing

⁷⁸ Partisan feeling may have dictated this judgment. For a more favorable interpretation of Federalist John Steele's motives see Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, xxv-xxviii, 312-313.

⁷⁹ Thomas Blount served as trustee of the University of North Carolina from 1792 to 1812. John Gray had served from 1796 to 1802, and William from 1789 to 1790. Connor, *Documentary History*, I, 59, n.2.

⁸⁰ Thomas to John Gray Blount, December 18, 1802, in this volume. Thomas Topping's Bill and Receipt, July 25, 1801, for other work for Reading Blount is in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

⁸¹ Mary Grainger Blount, widow of William Blount. Masterson, *William Blount*, 346.

to sitting up all last night with a sick friend, and not having an opportunity of Sleeping in the course of the day, these things put together will I trust be by you considered as a sufficient apology for the brevity of this letter.—I can only say that the business by you committed to my care engrosses the greater part of my attention, and that the several points by you requested shall be so conducted by me as to be made to comport with your best interest if possible—I shall write you frequently relative thereto when any thing occurs worthy your notice—My desire is to make full statements to you, your lands lie so scattered and the people with whom I have to do business live in so many parts of the Country and my residence so distant from them collectively and individually that it takes up much time to enable me to do a little business—an incomplete statement or accounting by parts in a business which requires connection to be rightly understood is a very unpleasant way to do any thing.—I shall write you again in a few days—Please read, wafer and forward the inclosed letter agreeably to the address, and when you see my nephew⁸² request him to write me often as nothing is more acceptable to my mind than to receive letters from him and my other nephews, for whom I feel (if I may be allowed the expression) a kind of parental regard and affection—He wrote me a very good and acceptable letter some time ago, since which there has been a chasm in our correspondence which I much regret—I wish you to say to John your Son that I shall write him soon, but now I have not time as I am half a sleep—[2] Mr. William Cobb⁸³ with whom our late brother William lived when he first came to the westward died the week before last—he was a good citizen—Please present me respectfully & affectionately to my Sister and family, to Reading and his and receive assurances yourself of my entire regard

Willie Blount

John Gray Blount Esqr.

Addressed: John Gray Blount Esquire
Washington
North Carolina

Hand by

Mr. Armstrong. }

⁸² Probably William Augustus, a younger son of John Gray, or possibly an older son, Thomas Harvey.

⁸³ Cobb was an influential early settler of Tennessee with whom William Blount lived in 1790-1791. See "William Cobb—Host of Governor Blount," in *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, IX (January, 1926), 241-263.

*Henry Selby to John Gray Blount*Raleigh 20th.. Nov^r. 1802.

Dear Sir.

The Legislature conven'd on the day appointed by Law, and proceeded to Business—But from the barrenness of so early a period, much cannot be collected wherewith to form the materials of a Letter: However having an opportunity by Mr Guion who goes to Hyde Court I have ventured to intrude upon you a view of the little ground that hath been travelled over

The Candidates for Government were John B. Ashe, Joseph Taylor and William Polk Esquires—A large majority of the two Houses being republican, and the political opinions of the candidates being well known to you it almost appears to be superfluous to say who was elected—The Poll however stood thus—John B. Ashe 103. Joseph Taylor 20 and W^m. Polk 49.

The Hon^{ble} Mr Stanly hath forwarded to the general Assembly, a Petition—Praying the interference of the Legislature in his behalf,⁸⁴ and that they will reccomend him to the clemency of the Executive—on which a [2] Committee appointed on the Subject, hath had a sitting, and will report in favour of the Petitioner. Whether their report will be concur'd with by the House, is a question too profound to be solved by me. The Subject hath given rise to much (street) conversation and a great difference of opinion prevails—Some contend that the practice of Duelling, so long Sanctioned by custom, is of great use in Society, and the benefits of restraining and confining Men within certain bounds they maintain is apparent and Self-evident, and in all cases of mutual combat, the offence should be immediately pardoned. By others it is contended that the practice is as impolitic as illegal, and ought in no case be tolerated, but the Laws of the Country enforced, with unbending Severity. A third class admit the utility of the practice—But notwithstanding will oppose the relolution [*sic*]—conceiving it premature to attempt a pardon before a prosecution is commenced. That to adopt the seeming object of Mr Stanlys Petition at this unseasonable Hour, would too much savour a vote of approbation for the act he had done—That hereafter should Mr Stanly be arraigned it would be early enough to extend clemency. The different politics of

⁸⁴ John Stanly had killed Richard Dobbs Spaight in a duel over politics on September 5, 1802, and criminal proceedings were instituted against him. Stanly petitioned the General Assembly for clemency and was pardoned by the governor despite the Assembly's refusal to approve the petition. Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, 184-185; *Journal of the Senate* [1803], 17; *Journal of the House of Commons* [1802], 7.

Mr Stanly and the [3] unfortunate general will have a great share in the decision—as also the high respect entertained for General Spaight, whose memory it is urged would in some sort be impeached, was the Legislature so hastily to attempt to shield Mr Stanly with their AEigis.

A Committee is appointed for the purpose of regulating the Districts⁸⁵—which business will engage much attention, and employ some time—as every pretender to Congress—either by himself or his Friends will be for carving out a District, to please himself. Nothing however hath transpired to enable me to say any more on this subject.

Mr [Joseph] Gales is continued as Printer to the State—He had no opponents

With regard to Earle Granville's claim⁸⁶ nothing more will be done I presume than appoint agents to defend the Suit already instituted.

I pray you to accept my thanks for your Friendly and polite attention so often repeated—And May the great disposer of events—as safely as he led the Children of Israel through the Red Sea, Lead you through this world of Troubles—

I am Respectfully Yr O. Servant
Hen. Selby

Addressed: John G. Blount Esquire
Washington

Fav'd by
Mr Guion }

*Travers and Way*⁸⁷ to John Gray Blount [with enclosure]

Bridport
Dorsetshire } Nov^r 23 1802

Mr. J. G. Blount
Washington North Carolina
Sir

The reestablishment of Peace in Europe leads us to hope

⁸⁵ The creation of electoral districts. *Laws of North Carolina* [1802], 4. See also Thomas to John Gray Blount, December 18, 1802, in this volume.

⁸⁶ A reference to a suit brought by the heirs of Granville, a Carolina Colonial Proprietor, against the State for confiscated land. According to the peace treaty of 1783, Granville's claims were still valid, but according to the Constitution of North Carolina they were invalid. The suit finally reached the courts in 1804 and extensive litigation ensued, but the claims were not allowed. Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, II, 197-198.

⁸⁷ Travers and H. B. Way were merchants of England who had long cultivated a North Carolina market. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 203, 215; Travers and Way to Blount, [March?] 1803, in John Gray Blount Papers.

that the Correspondence begun by our Mr. . Way the Writer of this with your good self in April 1792 when at Washington may now be continued to mutual advantage which would afford us much Pleasure; having at present occasion for a Cargo of Pitch Pine Boards and Planks of the very first quality if you have any Vessel that you could send to this Port with a Cargo [,] the whole to be even sawn square edged the full thickness at each edge and end and quite free from knotts and shakes [,] we would give you delivered here Seven Pounds Ten shillings British Sterling p One Thousand Feet one Inch measure for the Cargo delivered in this Harbour free of all expence to us payable by our furnishing the Master with what Money he may need for his Vessels use according to your direction & the remainder payable by Bills on London at three Months date or if it would accommodate you any thing we would say Two Months date from the delivery [,] should this offer be agreeable to you we will thank you for your acceptance of it in course [,] we shall only consider it binding on us provided you Ship the Cargo at the latest on or before the 31st. of March [2] 1803 and as small stowage will be wanted you might ship as much as is needed of four feet Cypress, White Cedar or Pitch Pine Splitt into Brlts [?] not less than two Inches thick any breadth or thickness above that most suitable for stowage provided it is strait free of knots will splitt well [;] for which we would give you here Four Pounds p Fathom piled Six Feet Wide Six Feet high provided the quantity did not exceed Six to Eight Fathoms [,] if you could Ship the Cargo immediately on receipt of this it would be more agreeable to us than its being longer delayed as should it be found to answer our purpose we might take another Cargo or two in the course of the ensuing year, with which we might take some other of your articles of Export [,] in order to which be so good as to favour us with the Prices at which you would deliver them here waiting your reply we are respectfully

Sir

Your Ob^t. Hble Serv^{ts}
Travers & Way

NB a Vessel for this Port
should not exceed 12 foot
draft of Water

[enclosure]

Specification of the Cargo wanted		
40	Thousand feet clear 1 Inch Pitch Pine Boards to be sawn square edged & Even full thickness at each Edge and end not less than 12 feet or more than 20 feet long	} Thousand Feet one Inch Measure being 40
10	Thousand Feet superficial Measure of clear 1 1/4 Inch Pitch Pine Flooring Boards not less than Six Inches Wide or more than Nine Inches Wide not less than 12 feet long or more than 20 feet long sown square edged the full thickness at each edge & end		} being 25
		<hr/> M. Feet 65

Carried Forward

[3] Specifica [tions Conti]nued*

Thousand Feet
one Inch Measure

Brought Forward		M. 65
10	Thousand foot 2 Inch Pitch Pine Plank clear of knotts not less than 12 feet long or more than 20 feet long sawn square edge even thickness at each edge & end	} being 20
10	Thousand Feet 3 Inch Pitch Pine Plank clear of knotts not less than 12 feet long or more than 20 feet long sawn even and sawn square edged full thickness at each edge & End	
		<hr/> M 115 feet <hr/>

* Manuscript torn.

we are not very particular whether the Cargo is a few Thousand Feet more or less but the sorts to be in proportion to the foregoing Specification [.] the Width of the one, two & three Inch is not material if it is not less than Nine Inches wide [.] as the One Inch & a quarter is for a particular purpose it should be of the width stated [.] if it would be more convenient to the Vessels stowage the haveing short Boards & Plank of the same thickness as the Cargo instead of the Fathom Wood we have mentioned we should have no objection provided none was Shipped under six feet Long but in that case we should expect an abatement in Price of 25 pCent on all short lengths under 12 feet and on whatever was shipped with knotts in it an abatement must be made of Twenty shillings p^r thousand Feet one Inch measure

(Ship Letter)

Travers & Way

Addressed: Mr J. G. Blount
Merchant
Washington
North Carolina

p^r the Kingston Captain Stevens
from Land on to New York
Single Post paid North America
to New York T&W

John Mayo to John Gray Blount

Shell Castle Decer. . 16th. . 1802

Dear Sir.

Your favour by Mr Hall I received, mentioning the receipt of my letter & Norris's receipt and am truly sorry it was not settled right, and agreeably to law—and am as much surprised, as yourself & greatly astonished, that Mr Norris Should attempt (as from your statement I make no doubt but he has) to take any more than was Justly his due, after my stating to him the Situation of yourself & family, at the time when payment was to be made; agreeably to your request to me when at your house. requesting him at the same time, to make every allowance, in his power, in your favour; as he told me your land was sub-

ject to a two fold Tax & was advertised. how that is you can best Judge.

I have no expectation of seeing Norris before February Term, but have wrote him yesterday fully on the business, requesting his answer & to refund the Money; as soon as I receive it Shall inform you. have also wrote Mr George Read Clerk of the Court, for a certificate of the county Tax—and to enquire for the clerk of the vestery (as I do not know [2] him) & obtain his also; when they arrive Shall transmit them immediately, as I wrote him pressingly to send them on.

However, the poll Tax for this county for year 1801, including all charges, is nine Shillings, or at least that is what I have paid, & do daily receive Now as Deputy Sherriff, which would makes your Taxes on 9600 acres of land (being informed that is your claim in this county) about £14.8 equal to 32 poll. which I calculated before, But Mr Norris telling me your land was subject to a two fold Tax, did not Dispute the sum demanded, & thought he was generous in making the deduction stated before, but am sorry to find to the contrary: as it was my desire to have done you Justice & rendered the public her Just dues. Mr Norris is to Blame or else greatly Mistaken, which of the two terms is applicable, you can best determine.

To conclude, what I have done in this business I am really sorry, that it has turned Out contrary to my intentions, but shall be glad at any time [(]when in my power) to serve you & hope in future in a correcter manner & more to the purpose. I am

with due respect & Esteem

Dear Sir

Your Most Obedt Hbl Servt.

John Mayo

John G. Blount Esqr.

Addressed: John G Blount Esqr.

Merchant

Washington

*Thomas Blount to John Gray Blount*Tarborough 18th Dec^r. 1802

Dear Sir,

By Geo Bradley whom I saw at Raleigh Information is received that our Brother William's widow is dead. John Hogg shewed me a Letter from Joseph Ball directing him to commence suit on our bonds that are due & prosecute them to effect without delay, & in order to do the Business in a manner most agreeable to our feelings & at the least possible expence to us, he has proposed that we should acknowledge the service of a writ returnable to New-Bern Sup^r. Court 15th Jan^r. next & then confess Judgment with stay of Execution until the 15th Jan^r. 1804—I told him I was willing to accede to his proposal & doubted not but it would be acceded to by you & Sharpe—that I would mention the subject to you & let him know your determination without delay—let me know by first opportunity what you intend doing—his attorney will be Mr Wood who must be informed in case you accede that I wave all right to plead to the Jurisdiction of that Court—[2] I had hoped from what You told me in May last that your arrangement for extinguishing that debt had been prosecuted; but Mr Ball informs Mr Hogg that it has not, & I suppose your failure was occasioned by the want of Vessels to carry your shingles to Market—at least I hope so, for should I be called on to pay within 12 months more money than I already have engaged to pay here my ruin must be the consequence. I borrowed \$500 to pay Turner, & nearly the same Sum to discharge the Judgt. obtained against Me by Ross & Parker on a promise to pay at Christmas which is now near at hand & I have not Ten Dollars, nor a chance of getting them unless I should be fortunate enough to find a purchaser for negroes which I fear will not be the case. The notes I rec^d. for Land do not enable me to raise Cash on any terms—The Ballance now due J[ohn?]. H[aywood?]. is £48.4.0. Reading promised to send me before this time seventy odd Dollars for acco^t. of Topping & if he has collected them he will much oblige me by sending [3] then by Mr Brickell—I yesterday paid away my last Dollar for a Cotton Gin which will probably begin to work about Thursday next. I trust this machine will enable me to continue House Keeping, but there is not Cotton enough to afford me a prospect of making money by it to be applied to the payment of my debts—What sort of voyage did Your Brig make? The district we live in is

composed of the Counties of Edgecombe, Pitt, Beaufort, Hyde, Washington & Tyrrell—The people of this County urge & expect me to be a candidate, but I have not positively said that I will, or will not—feeling in reality no wish for public employment, of any sort, I shall be governed in my determination by what I may understand to be the wishes of those who formerly drew me into their service & were pleased with my services—The Interests of Mr [William] K[ennedy]. have doubtless been well attended to by the members from your County in the formation of the Districts⁸⁸—I rec^d. from William Person, who has lately been to Tennessee, some Information concerning the situation of a part of your Land in that Country [4] which I must take an early opportunity to communicate by word of mouth as I cannot well do it in writing—The necessity of getting my Gin to work before Christmas obliges me to decline visiting you next week, but I will endeavor to see you the week after—You have heard that my friends tried to make me a Gov^r.⁸⁹ They did so without my knowledge or consent & contrary to my wish. I knew nothing of their design until I arrived at Raleigh—2 days after the conclusion of the Ballotting. We are all well & Join in Love, Comp^{ts} &c. to you & your family

Yours

Tho. Blount

Col. Arrington has again
spoken to me about a Note
in form for the Money you
owe him—he wishes to get such
a note & pay it to Mr Donaldson
with whom he is to make settle-
ment about 1. Jan^y. next at this
place.

⁸⁸ Thomas Blount did run for Congress in 1803. His statement of William Kennedy's advantage from the redistricting by the General Assembly appears correct as Blount lost by 70 votes. Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy*, 241.

⁸⁹ John B. Ashe was elected governor on November 20, 1802, but he died before assuming office. Thomas Blount, along with others, was nominated for the second election, but James Turner of Warren was elected. *Journal of the Senate* [1802], 19, 26; Ashe, *History of North Carolina*, II, 187.

OTHER PAPERS FOR 1796-1802

Power of Attorney—Henry Williamson¹

[February 10, 1796]

KNOW ALL MEN by these presents

That I *Henry Williamson of North Carolina Hyde County[,] Mattamuskeet² [,] Merchant called in an Order dated the 10th February 1796 made in the Cause Fitzgerald ag^t. Joye Charles Bargeau by the Name of Henry Williamson — — — — —*
 Have nominated constituted and appointed And by these Presents
 do nominate constitute and appoint *William Murdock of John Street in The Minories³ London Merchant — — — — —*

— — — — — *my true and lawful Attorney— — — — —*
 — — — — — *for me and in my Name or in his own name.*

..... but for *my* use to ask demand and receive of and
 from the Accountant General of the Court of Chancery a *Cheque*
Note or Draft to be by him drawn on the Governor and Company
of the Bank of England for the sum of One hundred and twelve
pounds ten shillings being one fourth part of £450 Cash in the
Cause Fitzgerald ag^t. Joye which is directed to be paid to Charles
Bargeau by the Name of Henry Williamson by an Order of the
said Court dated the 10th. February 1796 made in the said
Cause — — — — —

And I do hereby authorize and empower *my* said Attorney—
 to write and endorse *my* name—on the back of such note-or
 Draft—and to receive the money drawn from thereby from the
 Bank of England And on receipt of such Note or Draft—and
 Sum—of Money to give proper acquittances and discharges for
 the same to the said Accountant General and the Bank of Eng-
 land Hereby ratifying and confirming whatsoever my said At-
 torney—shall do in the Premisses by virtue of these presents

¹ Charles Bargeau, alias Henry Williamson, was a Blount creditor attempting to collect an inheritance. See Mary Fitzgerald to Henry Williamson, June 24, 1796, in this volume.

² The area around Mattamuskeet Lake in Hyde County.

³ The Little Minories is an area near and northwest of the Tower of London. The names Little Minories and Minories Street are derived from a long defunct convent. Jean Rocque, *A Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, and borough of Southwark* (London: I. Rine and I. Tinney, 1746).

IN WITNESS whereof I have *hereto* set my hand and seal this
_____ day of _____ in the Year of our Lord
one Thousand seven Hundred and *Ninety Six*

Sealed and Delivered
(being first duly Stamp'd
in the present of

*Henry Williamson otherwise
Charles Bargeau called in the
above Order Henry Williamson*

*A List of Grants taken to Philadelphia by John Strother for
David Allison⁴—*

[April 23, 1796]

Cumberland County	David Allison N.º. 1194	Issued July 18th 1795	5800 Acres
Dº.	Dº. 1195	Dº.	1612
Dº.	dº. 1196	dº.	460
Dº.	dº. 1197	dº.	800
dº.	dº. 1198	dº.	600
dº.	dº. 1199	dº.	887.
dº.	dº. 1200	dº.	1380
dº.	dº. 1201	dº.	1194
dº.	dº. 1202	dº.	500
dº.	dº. 1203	dº.	400
dº.	dº. 1204	dº.	500
dº.	dº. 1205	dº.	640
dº.	dº. 1206	dº.	400
dº.	dº. 1218	Decr. 10 th . 1795	200
dº.	dº. 1219	dº.	200
dº.	dº. 1220	dº.	200
dº.	dº. 1221	dº.	320
eson County	dº. 1234	June 19 th . 1795	640.
re County	dº. 750	Decr. 10 th . 95	400
dº.	dº. 751	dº.	3474
dº.	dº. 752	dº.	546.
dº.	dº. 753	dº.	640
dº.	dº. 754	dº.	640
dº.	dº. 755	dº.	300
dº.	dº. 756	dº.	360
dº.	dº. 757	dº.	640
dº.	dº. 758	dº.	640
dº.	dº. 759	dº.	640

⁴ Allison had requested that a list of grants be forwarded to him in Philadelphia in order that he might close a land deal. See Allison to Blount, February 13, April 15, and April 22, 1796, in this volume. The grants listed here total 43,391 acres, and of course constitute a small fraction of the vast Blount holdings. They are included here merely as a sample of one type of holding (small plots). The messenger had other responsibilities as shown in the added memorandum.

County			Issued July	
Moore	David Allison	N.º. 760	18th 1795	640 Acres
dº.	dº.	761	dº.	970
dº.	dº.	762	dº.	450
dº.	dº.	763	dº.	775
dº.	dº.	764	dº.	514
dº.	dº.	765	dº.	548
dº.	dº.	766	dº.	403
dº.	dº.	767	dº.	242.
dº.	dº.	768	dº.	640
dº.	dº.	769	dº.	640
dº.	dº.	770	dº.	637.
dº.	dº.	771	dº.	232.
dº.	dº.	772	dº.	364.
dº.	dº.	773	dº.	609.
dº.	dº.	774	dº.	630
dº.	dº.	775	dº.	640
dº.	dº.	776	dº.	410
dº.	dº.	777	dº.	400
dº.	dº.	778	dº.	260
dº.	dº.	779	dº.	640
dº.	dº.	780	dº.	550
dº.	dº.	781	dº.	546.
dº.	dº.	782	dº.	640
dº.	dº.	783	dº.	250
dº.	dº.	784	dº.	239
dº.	dº.	785	dº.	425
dº.	dº.	786	dº.	360
dº.	dº.	787	dº.	313
dº.	dº.	788	dº.	230
dº.	dº.	789	dº.	343
dº.	dº.	790	dº.	269
dº.	dº.	791	dº.	112
dº.	dº.	792	dº.	296
dº.	dº.	793	dº.	235
dº.	dº.	794	dº.	160
dº.	dº.	795	dº.	330
dº.	dº.	796	dº.	316
dº.	dº.	797	dº.	175
dº.	dº.	798	dº.	725
dº.	dº.	799	dº.	245
dº.	dº.	800	dº.	250
		801	dº.	<u>725</u>

Rec^d. the above Grants by the hands of Cap^t John
Strother for account of John G Blount April 23^d 1796

David Allison

A List of Grants for David Allison

In addition to the Mem^o. get y^e.

Young Miss's Magazeene for Miss

Polly Blount and such other Books

as Mr. Tho^s. Blount should think proper

1 prayer Book

William Blount—Andrew Jackson Note⁵

[June 11, 1796—July 12th 1798]

Dollars 4539 ⁹⁴/₁₀₀

Phil^a. June 11th 1796.

Two years after date I promise to pay Andrew Jackson Esquire or order four thousand five Hundred thirty nine dollars ninety four Cents, with Interest from the date for value received

W^m. Blount

A Copy

[On the original are the following endorsements.] I bind myself my Heirs &c for the payment of the within sum.

May the second 1798.

James Stuart⁶

Then received from James Stuart the sum of Eight Hundred & nineteen dollars 59 & ²/₃ cents for which a receipt was past to him for the same on that day.

Andrew Jackson

I assign the within to Robert Stothart
July 12th. 1798.

Andrew Jackson

Test And^w. McNairy C.S.C.

⁵ See David Allison to Blount, August 19, 1796, n.171, in this volume.

⁶ Stuart served as land agent in Philadelphia. Bassett, *Correspondence of Jackson*, I, 22.

Draft of John Gray and Thomas Blount on Robert Smithey⁷

1000 Dollars

Washington Aug^t 25th 1796

At sixty days sight of this our first of Exchange (second not paid) please pay to Jn^o. G. L. Schenck or order One thousand Dollars and place the same to the account of

Your most obedient
JG & Tho^s. Blount

Mr Robert J. Smithey
Merchant
City of Washington
[Endorsed]

Pay to Mr. James Cavan or order

Jn^o. G. L. Schenck

State of Maryland, Montgomery County, to wit:
BE IT KNOWN, that I SAMUEL HANSON of Saml. Notary
Public for the county aforesaid, dwelling in GEORGETOWN in said county, duly commissioned and sworn, this day went to the house of *Robert* S. Smethey* and presented for his acceptance the original Bill of Exchange

whereof the above is a true copy and demanded of *the said Smithey whether he would accept the payment of the sum of One thousand Dollars* in the said bill specified, and received for answer from the said *Smethey that he would not accept the same*

WHEREFORE, and at the request of *W^m Deakens jun^r*

I DO PROTEST against *the said JG & Tho^s. Blount the Drawers, and against the said Jn^o. G. L. Schenck the Endorser of the said bill*

for the aforesaid Sum of *One thousand Dollars* together with all legal interest, damages, costs and charges, which have accrued or may accrue by reason or occasion of the premises.

IN TESTIMONY whereof I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed my Seal notarial this *Ninth* day of *September*
Anno Domini, 1796

S Hanson of Same Not. Pub.
(Cost of Protest 12/3)

Addressed: Mr Schenck

⁷ This marks the collapse of the Smithey and Budden firm. See David Allison to Blount, March 11, 1796, with note, in this volume.

* Italicized words are handwritten.

Blackledge Warning

[September 23, 1796]

John Cole Esquire, Toddy Robeson, & Henry W Harrington⁸

Take Notice

That I Richard Blackledge Agent of David Allison of the City of Philadelphia, do by these presents, forwarn you or Either of you, or any other person claiming in right of you, your Heirs or Assignes: from using in any manner of way whatever; The Lands Granted to David Allison of the City of Philadelphia, by the State of North Carolina in the County of Richmond as will appear of Record, to Amount, Two Hundred Thousand Three hundred & Twenty Acres; and Illegally Sold by John Cole Sheriff of the County of Richmond at the Courthouse in said County, on the 23^d day of September 1796. for the Purpose of Collecting the [taxes?]* thereon for the Year 1795—and Pretended to be held by Toddy Robeson & Henry W Harrington—

As the taxes thereon hath been justly Tendered for the same—you or either of you, or any other person whatever who may Presume in any way to use Occupy or Meddle therewith in Virtue of the Sale made on the aforesaid 23^d. day of Sept^r may expect to be dealt with According to Law⁹

R^d Blackledge
Agent of
David Allison

Strother Affidavit

[October 15, 1796]

State of North Carolina }
Richmond County. }

To all whom it may concern¹⁰

Know Ye that John Strother by the directions of Richard Blackledge agent of David Allison of the City of Philadelphia in the

⁸ Cole was the sheriff of Richmond County. Robeson is unidentified. Harrington was a plantation owner in Richmond County. "Census 1790" in Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 954.

* Manuscript torn.

⁹ An attempt by Blackledge to save lands of his and Allison's that had been sold at a tax sale. It represents the constant problems of the Blounts in owning large tracts at a distance, and paying taxes in cash on time. See Strother Affidavit, October 15, 1796, be'ow.

¹⁰ Strother's attempt, as Richard Blackledge's agent, to salvage Allison's and Blackledge's land sold for taxes. See Blackledge warning, September 23, 1796, above; Edward Jones to Richard Blackledge, October 10, 1796, in this volume.

State of Pennsylvania; did on the 15th. . day of October 1796 in the Presents of John Bounds and John Croson Justices of the Peace for the said County of Richmond
 Tender and count unto John Cole Esquire Sheriff of the said County of Richmond, One hundred & Sixty Six Pounds Nineteen Shillings, as a Payment in full for the Taxes due for the Year 1795, on Two hundred Thousand Three hundred and Twenty Acres of Land, as given in by the said Richard Blackledge agent for the said David Allison agreeable to Law, For the purpose of paying such Taxes as by Law the said Land was subject to; which Taxes, so due for the Year 1795 it appears amounts to, One hundred & Sixty Six Pounds Eighteen Shillings & Eight pence farthing North Carolina Currency, as will more fully appear by referring to the following account, acknowledged by the Said John Cole Esqr. . to be Justly and accurately Stated—Viz.—

Dr. . David Allison of Philadelphia

. To John Cole Sheriff
 of Richmond County North Carolina

1796

October

For the Public Tax due for the Year 1795 on 200320 Acres of Land as given in by Your Agent Rich^d. Blackledge

£ 66. . 15 . . 5 $\frac{3}{4}$

For the County Tax on Ditto Ditto @ 8^d. p^r.

100 Acres—66. . 15 . . 5 $\frac{3}{4}$

For the Parish Ditto on Ditto . . Ditto @ 4^d p^r. Ditto — 33. . 7:
 8 $\frac{3}{4}$

North Carolina Currency . . £ 166 . . 18 . . 8 3.4

On counting & Tendering the aforesaid One Hundred & Sixty Six Pounds Nineteen Shillings to the said John Cole Esquire, as a payment in full for the aforesaid Taxes, due from the said David Allison for the before mentioned year 1795, on the aforesaid Two Hundred Thousand Three Hundred & Twenty Acres of Land agreeable to the foregoing account or statement of the said Taxes —John Strother by the directions of Richard Blackledge Agent of the said David Allison, demanded of him the aforesaid John Cole Sheriff, a receipt in full for the said Taxes, which Receipt the Said John Cole Esquire refused to give, at the same time declaring that he would not Receive the money Tendered as aforesaid, for the Taxes aforesaid due on the said Two Hundred Thousand Three Hundred & Twenty Acres of Land belonging to the

aforesaid David Allison, Because he the Said John Cole Esquire had previous to the aforesaid Tender of money & a Demand of a receipt for the same as a payment in full for the before mentioned Taxes Advertised the Said Land to be sold at the Court-house of Richmond County aforesaid on the 21st. . day of August 1796. for the Taxes due thereon for the Year 1795, That Previous to the said 21st day of Aug^t 1796 he rec^d. a Letter from Richard Blackledge (say about the 10th. . of Aug^t. 1796) informing him the said John Cole that he the said Blackledge would pay the am^t. . of the Taxes due as aforesaid to the Treasurer or to him the said John Cole——* the 6th. . of October 1796. That in consequence of this Letter he the said John Cole did then Pospone the Sale of said Land untill the 23^d. of Sept^r. 1796. on which day Viz the 23^d. September 1796 he the said John Cole Esquire offered the said Two Hundred Thousand Three hundred & Twenty Acres of Land for sale to the highest bidder for the Taxes due as aforesaid; When Toddy Roberson & Henry W. Harrington appearing to be the highest bidders at One Hundred & Seventy five Pounds one Shilling North Carolina Currency for the aforesaid Two Hundred Thousand three Hundred & Twelve Acres of Land, which sum being more than Sufficient to cover the aforesaid Taxes due on the Said Lands, the Same was therefore Struck off to the Said Toddy Roberson & Henry W. Harrington Esq^r. for their bidd of One Hundred & Seventy five Pounds One Shilling as foresaid—

That on the 2^d. day of October 1796 John Strother called on him the Said John Cole Esquire and proposed to pay unto him the said John Cole Esq^r. in behalf and on account of him the said Richard Blackledge agent of said Allison, the money in full for the aforesaid Taxes due on the Land as before mentioned, which money he the said John Cole Esq^r. refused to receive, giving at the same time reasons simular as herein before mentioned for his refusal and still now refuseth to receive the same——

Now be it known that as the aforesaid John Strother by the directions of Richard Blackledge Agent of David Allison as aforesaid, considers the aforesaid sale of the Two Hundred Thousand Three Hundred & Twenty Acres of Land herein before mentioned, made to the said Toddy Roberson & Henry W. Harrington Esq^{rs}. on the said 23^d. day of Sept^r. 1796. at the said Court-house of Richmond County, by him the aforesaid John Cole Esq^r. . to be Illegal and Contrary to Law, and also subversive of

* Manuscript frayed and torn.

the rights and Privileges of the Citizens of this free Government, Therefore he the said John Strother for Richard Blackledge Agent of David Allison as aforesaid, Tenders the above Amount of One Hundred and Sixty Six Pounds Nineteen Shillings [2] as herein before mentioned to the said John Cole Esqr. in the dwelling house of the said John Cole at the Courthouse of Richmond County, the same being first counted in the presence of said Cole and John Bounds Jr John Croson Esquires Therefore I the said John Strother for and in behalf of the said Richard Blackledge Agent of David Allison as aforesaid, Have Protested and by these Presents do solemnly Protest against the aforesaid John Cole Esquire high sheriff of the aforesaid County of Richmond in said State of North Carolina as well as against the aforesaid Toddy Roberson & Henry W. Harrington Esquires and all other Persons whatsoever concerned in the foregoing combination to defraud the said David Allison for all damages, Costs & charges suffered as to be suffered for the Unlawfull and Illegal proceedings of the aforesaid John Cole Esquire of the said County of Richmond, the said Toddy Roberson, & Henry W Harrington Esquires and all others concerned in the aforesaid sale of the Two Hundred Thousand Three hundred and Twenty Acres of Land, belonging to the Said David Allison as herein before mentioned Sold to them the said Toddy Robeson and Henry W. Harrington for the before mentioned Sum of One Hundred and Seventy five Pounds one Shilling North Carolina Currency, at the aforesaid Courthouse of Richmond County on the said 23^d. of Sept^r. 1796 to discharge the Taxes due on the Said Land for the year 1795—

Done and Protested at the Courthouse of Richmond County in the Presence of John Bound and John Croson Justices assigned to keep the Peace in the aforesaid County of Richmond—In Testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my Seal at the Courthouse aforesaid this 15th day of October 1796—

John Strother [Seal]

State of North Carolina
Richmond County

}

We John Bounds and John Croson Justices assigned to keep the Peace in & for the said County of Richmond; do hereby Certify that John Strother came before us this 15th. . .day of October 1796 and entered the aforegoing Protest agreeable to Law—& we further Certify that we were

present when he the said Strother in behalf of Richard Blackledge Agent of David Allison Counted and Tendered to John Cole Esq^r The Sum of One Hundred & Sixty Six Pounds Nineteen Shillings in full of the Taxes due on Two hundred Thousand Three hundred and Twenty Acres of Land given in by the Said Blackledge as the Property of the Said Allison which he the Said John Cole Esquire Sheriff of the S^d. County of Richmond refused to receive, and receipt for, giving for reasons such as are stated in the above Protest or Similar to them.

Given under our hands this 15th day of October 1796——

John Crowsson
JBounds

John Gray Blount Notebook¹¹

[May 10, 1797]

List of Cattle sent to Parch Corn Bay¹² one half of which to be charged Jno Hollowell & he to be Cr. with the half he furnishes

two Cows & yearlings

two three year old Heifers

two two year old Bulls

The above from Ann Harveys Plantation.

One Cow & yearling JGBlount own

two Cows & yearlings of Toms

one three year old Heifer

one two year old Bull

yearlings two

three two year olds

[2] List of Negros purchased of Ann Harvey & their Ages¹³

		Doll
Moses	55	100
his wife Oie	50	60
Nero	16	250
Cara	14	200

¹¹ Like his father before him, John Gray Blount kept various small notebooks in which he recorded random information. Items from one of these are informative.

¹² Apparently a share of the stock and equipment with which John Hollowell, son of the Blount overseer Ira Hollowell, was to farm on shares with the Blounts. Keith, *Blount Papers*, II, 254.

¹³ This list confirms the fact that Anne (Blount) Harvey was a woman of means. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xxx.

Moses	12	175
Primus	28	300
Sam	26	300
wife Morete	20	200
Lite	3	50
Ester	2	40
sal	4m°.	30
Ames Robins Wife	35	170
Milly	14	170
Ruphas	12	175
Bob	10	140
Tomson	8	90
Aaron	6	80
Robin	4	70
Henry	3	50
Alsey	2	40
Jose	2m°.	30
		<hr/>
		2720
		<hr/>

[3]

Bristol	26	300
Hagar	22	
Cook		
Merrium	36	170
Titus	14	180
Bill	6	70
Alley	2	40
		<hr/>
		Dollars 3480

All the undersigned being requested by Ann Harvey & John Gray Blount to value the aforementioned Negros have valued them to

be worth three thousand four Hundred and Eighty Silver Dollars

May 10th 1797
R Blackledge
Reading Blount
Jacob Blount

[4] List of Negros purchased of Mr. Willie Blount & their Ages

George aged	35	300
his wife Cherry aged	30	200
Children Dorcas .. aged	year	90
Che ^s .	d ^o	80
Mary	d ^o	60
Gulford	d ^o	40
Dick aged	55	50
Tim	50	50
Brutus . sucked when Mr ^s . Hannah Blount ¹⁴		
died	14	50
Nelly	6 years	70
Anthony	4 d ^o	70
Hager Bristows wives young wench		200
Flora Fordham child	13 d ^o	160
Ishmael	18 d ^o	300
Frank	20 d ^o	400

Doll^s. 2120

[5] We the undersigned having been call'd on by John Gray Blount to value the foregoing fifteen negroes Have valued them to be worth two thousand one Hundred & Twenty Dollars Witness our Hand this 10th day of May 1797.

R. Blackledge
Reading Blount
Jacob Blount

¹⁴ Hannah Salter Blount, second wife of Jacob Blount, Sr. and the mother of Willie and Jacob Blount, Jr. Keith, *Blount Papers*, I, xvii. It appears from this that she died in 1783.

[6] List of negros sent to Parched Corn

- 1 Tony on hire
- 2 George
- 3 Abraham
- 4 Robin on hire
Dick
- 5 Primus drowned
- 6 moses
- 7 Ishmael
- 8 Sampson drown'd
- 9 Nero
- 10 Sam

- [7] When W Blounts business is a little settled¹⁵ it will be well to inquire what became of the Land Go.^r [Benjamin] Williams purchased of Cap^t. McRee for him & W Blount & for p^t of which he drew of WB in his Letters of the Lands Sam^l. Mitchell purchas^d. for himself & W^m Blount & drew on WB
The Land JB Ashe convey'd WB in Ja^s McClunt 2560 Acres

Abner Neale to John Gray Blount¹⁶

[November 24, 1797]

This Indenture made the twenty fourth day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety seven, between Abner Neale of the town of Newbern of the one part and John Gray Blount of the town of Washington of the other part Witnesseth that the said Abner Neale for and in consideration of the sum of ten thousand three hundred dollars to him in hand paid by the said John Gray Blount before the sealing and delivery of these presents the receipt where of is hereby acknowledged, hath given and granted bargained and sold, enfeoffed, and conveyed and by these presents doth give and grant bargain and sell, enfeoff and convey to the said John Gray Blount and his heirs the several tracts and parcels of land and negroes following, to wit, About eight hundred acres adjoining the town lands, on which the said Neale now lives including both plantations—

¹⁵ This entry was probably made later than the others and after William Blount's death in 1800, which left his affairs in chaotic state.

¹⁶ Abner Neale was not a notably successful businessman, and was particularly pressed at the time of his removal from New Bern to Washington, North Carolina. Neale to Blount, February 5, March 3, and April 15, 1796, in this volume.

One half of two tracts at Possum point containing three hundred twenty five acres—One half of two hundred acres lying on Coates,s creek—One third part of fifty acres adjoining the land sold by Oliver to Richard D Spaight—Six hundred and forty acres on the head of Adams's creek—One half of one hundred and fifty acres at Turnagun Bay—One hundred acres on the head of Coates,s creek patented by R. Lancaster—One half of a tract lying at Point mash and piney Island, the above mentioned lands lying in Craven County. Also five hundred and seventy acres on the head of Wysocking creek—One fourth part of a tract of six hundred acres lying on the North side of Mattamuskeet Lake held jointly with Singleton and Jones and one hundred and twenty three acres on the South side of said Lake held jointly with Singleton and Jones and one hundred and twenty three acres on the South side of said Lake adjoining the land sold by said Neale to Cason Gibbs, the three last tracts lying in Hyde county; also the following Negroes named Achilles ,Charles, Sam, Parker, Juno, Rose, Sall, Hannah and Patt. To have and to hold the said several tracts and parcels of land [2] negroes and pre-mises with all singular the appurtenances thereunto belonging or in any wise appertaining unto the said John Gray Blount his heirs Executors Administrators and assigns forever; Provided never the less that if the said Abner Neale his heirs executors or administrators shall, at any time within two years from the date of this Indenture, well and truly pay to the said John Gray Blount his heirs executors or administrators the sum of three thousand four hundred Dollars with interest thereon from the twenty eighth of September one thousand seven hundred and ninety five until paid and also the farther sum of six thousand four hundred and fifty dollars with interest from the date hereof then the present indenture and conveyance and every matter and thing therein contained shall determine and be void and of no effect. And the said Abner Neale for himself his heirs and assigns doth covenant and grant to and with the said John Gray Blount that on the said Abner Neale failing to pay the aforesaid sums of money within the time aforesaid that then it shall be lawful for the said John Gray Blount his Executors administrators and heirs to sell and dispose, at any time there after, of all or so much of the aforesaid land and negroes as shall be sufficient to satisfy the said John G Blount the aforesaid sums of money with the interest thereon, and the said John G Blount his heirs Executors and administrators on failure as aforesaid, are hereby fully

authorized and inpowered to sell all or any part of the aforesaid property and to make absolute and indefeasable conveyances of the same discharged from the aforesaid conditions as any charge or encumbrance whatever—provided never the less that the said John Gray Blount shall be accountable to the said Abner Neale for all sums of money arising on the said sales over and above the several sums aforesaid with the interest thereon. And the said [3] Abner Neale doth further covenant and grant to and with the said John G. Blount, that he the said Abner his heirs Executors and Administrators in failure of payment as aforesaid, the aforesaid lands & negroes and every part and parcel thereof, to the said John G. Blount his heirs and assigns, and to all and every other such person or persons that shall under or by virtue of the fore going covenant & become purchasers of any part thereof their heirs and assigns shall and will warrant and forever defend against the claim or claims of all persons whatsoever In Witness whereof the said Abner Neale hath hereunto set his hand and seal the day and year first above written

Abner Neale [Seal]

Signed sealed & delivered }
 in presence of }
 George Ellis
 John Howard

*Election Circular*¹⁷

[n. d.]

[To the Freem]en* of the counties of Halifax, Northampton, Martin, Edgecombe, Pitt and Beaufort, composing Election District No. 9 [It is no l]onger* a secret whether Mr. Blount is a Candidate to represent you in the Congress [of the]* United States.

[He has]* published a lengthy Address, denying some charges of a very serious nature that are——ion* against him; and asserting that they were propagated by his enemies, probably to ——* our confidence to themselves or their intimate friends— Let us for a moment enquire [into the]* nature of those charges,

¹⁷ See Thomas to John Gray Blount, May 17, and June 21, 1789, in this volume.
 * Manuscript torn.

and from whence they arose, and compare them and the So-[called]* General's letter with his Address, whether he is that very immaculate, upright and vir[tuous]* man he professes to be. The Legislature of North Carolina, at their last session of As[ssembly]*, discovered that great frauds in the obtaining of land-warrants and grants had been committed in the Secretary's office. It being late in the session before the discovery was made, they thought it most adviseable to appoint Commissioners to examine into the matter. Those Commissioners after fully investigating the business, reported to the Governor at Raleigh, on the 4th or 5th day of April; and he laid the same before the Solicitor-General, Edward Jones, Esquire, at Hillsborough Superior court, which commenced on the 6th day of April. The substance of this report so far as it concerned Mr. Thomas Blount, soon transpired, and coming to ears of Mr. Barnes, of Halifax, he immediately informed Mr. Blount of it. Mr. Blount then wrote to Mr. Barnes an answer, denying the charges, and positively asserting that they were circulated by his enemies for the purpose of injuring his election—when it was not known that he was a candidate. Mr. Barnes again wrote him, that he actually was reported against by the Commissioners, as having been concerned, jointly with John G. Blount, in procuring fraudulent duplicate land-warrants to a very great amount—I am warranted in saying upwards of 120,000 acres; of which the state has undoubtedly been defrauded. Whether Mr. Thomas Blount had any knowledge of the frauds at the time they were practising has not as yet been satisfactorily ascertained, but that he was interested in them must appear very evident from his own address, when he admits a land-jobbing connexion with his brother, under the firm of John G. & Thomas Blount—under which all the frauds were committed.

When Mr. Blount went on to Philadelphia last, he could not determine whether he would be a candidate again or not, because he had been implicated in the charges against his brother William, the late Governor of Tennessee and Senator in Congress; or rather because it might be supposed that he was implicated. He said that his intentions should be made known in March—behold! they are not known till July. What is the cause of this delay? Let me answer—It was known in Philadelphia by the first of March, that great frauds had been practiced in the Secretary's office on land warrants and grants, and that an investigation was to be

* Manuscript torn.

had on the subject. It was therefore a cause of serious alarm to every person who had been deeply interested in land speculation. Mr. Blount, from conscious guilt, withheld from declaring himself a candidate, until he should acquire certain information of the extent of the discoveries made against him; and it was not till after he had received the Solicitor-General's milky letter, that he even ventured to come forward through the prudent channel of a hand bill—had he manfully published his Address in the news-paper, it would have been a free subject for every one to remark on.

We need only have recourse to the 4th fact (as he terms it) set forth in Mr. Blount's Address to fix on him the character of a land speculator. It is in these words—"That the whole business of John G. & Thomas Blount, in respect to all lands and land warrants owned or claimed under that firm, military lands only excepted, has been conducted by John G. Blount, in a manner nearly as little known to me as to any one of you."—Can any man believe this to be a fact, when there always existed the most intimate brotherly intercourse betwixt them? The purchase money of 120,000 acres of land in John Armstrong's office amounted to 12,000, in certificates—Was Mr. Thomas Blount's circumstances such, that he would have advanced the half of that sum and never have enquired about it—when it is a notorious fact that they have been exceedingly embarrassed in their pecuniary circumstances, owing to their immense land speculations?

It appears from the Solicitor-General's letter, which Mr. Blount has annexed as a part of his Address, that a future investigation is to be had on the subject aforementioned.—When this takes place, we shall the better be able to judge of Mr. Blount's innocence; but in the mean time would it not be the height of folly and madness to re-elect a man to an office of the highest trust and confidence, while labouring under so well grounded suspicions?

Mr. Blount has one session of Congress yet to serve whether he is re-elected or not, should he be again chosen it might possibly prevent the future investigation the Solicitor-General talks of—it must at least postpone it two years. The effect of delay in public prosecutions, is too well known in this country to require commenting on.

Mr. Thomas Blount says that he never assigned, indorsed or otherwise transferred any land-warrants granted to John G. & Thomas Blount, or knew that John G. Blount or any other person

had, and the Solicitor-General says, that the assignments did not appear to be in his hand-writing. This is ingeniously avoiding the charge. The crime with which the Blounts are ch[arg]ed,* is not in assigning the original warrants, but in fraudulently obtaining the duplicate w[arr]ants*—that is to say, in getting warrants and titles for 120,000 acres of land, for which they ne[v]er* had paid a farthing.

The Solicitor-General says, "that it does not appear under what pretence these duplicates have issued." This is very censurable official trifling, and will not veil this dirty business—Every man knows that they could not have been obtained honestly: it must either have been by fr[aud or]† perjury, [The So]llicitor-†General says he did not indict him at last Hillsborough superior court. Why [.]† does not indict them next court, there is neither virtue nor justice left in the coun-[try]† ———† laws may then truly be compared to cobwebs—equal to the catching of small flies ———† [br]oke† through by the wasps. ———† not Mr. Blount in his address, admit that the frauds were committed under the [name of JG]† and Thomas Blount, and for their benefit? His pocketing the profits, and at ———le† his brother with the whole criminality, is too stale a trick to impose on any one. ———† Mr. Blount's address is pretty generally circulated through the district, it is [not neces]sary† to make any further observations on it, as every person will be able to judge [upon?]† reading it—if positively denying charges, were sufficient to exculpate a man, ———† be found guilty.

AN ELECTOR.

Strother-Hodge Indenture

[April 27, 1798]

This Indenture made this twenty seventh day of April one Thousand seven hundred and Ninety Eight, Between Philamon Hodge Esquire, High Sheriff of the County of Cumberland and state of North Carolina, of the one part, and John Strother¹⁸ of the County of Beaufort and state aforesaid, of the other part.

Whereas the Tax for the year one Thousand seven Hundred

* Hole in manuscript.

† Manuscript torn.

¹⁸ This is an example of John Strother's practice of purchasing (for Blount) at tax sales the lands of Blount and Allison being sold there for unpaid taxes. See Strother to Blount, December 29, 1798, in this volume.

and Ninety six became due on sixteen Thousand six hundred and thirty acres Patented by David Allison; and sixty six Thousand and Eighteen acres Patented by John Gray Blount—both parcels situate in the said County of Cumberland, and the said Tax was not paid therefor. The said Philimon Hodge, high sheriff, as aforesaid, did advertise the same in the North Carolina Minerva and at several Public places to be sold at the courthouse of Cumberland county in the Town of Fayetteville on the twenty third day of April 1798 to the highest bidder, to be continued from day to day till the whole should be sold, or so much thereof as would satisfy the Tax due thereon, agreeable to act of Assembly, in that case made and provided; and the said John Strother at the place and on the twenty fourth day of April aforesaid, after the said Land was exposed to public sale in manner aforesaid, became the last and highest bidder for the aforesaid quantities of Land at the sum of seventy two Pounds seventeen shillings which land is situate in the County of Cumberland, and state aforesaid, and is known by the following Tracts—(Viz) That part Patented by David Allison—one Grant Number One Thousand and seventy five for six Hundred and forty Acres Granted the twenty third day of April one Thousand seven hundred & ninety five, one other Grant, Number Eleven hundred and ninety four for Five Thousand & Eight hundred acres, Granted the Eighteenth of July 1795. one other Grant Number Eleven hundred and Ninety five for One Thousand six hundred and twelve acres, Granted the Eighteenth of July 1795—one other grant number Eleven hundred and ninety six for four hundred and sixty acres, Granted the 18th July 1795—one other Grant, Number Eleven hundred and Ninety seven for Eight hundred acres—Granted 18th. . July 1795—one other Grant Number Eleven hundred and Ninety eight for six hundred acres, granted the 18th July 1795—one other Grant Number Eleven hundred and ninety nine for Eight hundred and [ei]ghty* seven acres, Granted the 18th. July 1795—One other Grant number twelve hundred for t[we]lve* hundred & Eighty acre[s]* Granted the 18th July 1795—one other Grant number twelve hundred and one, for Eleven hundred and ninety four acres—Granted the 18th July 1795—One Other Grant Number Twelve hundred and two, for five hundred acres, Granted the 18th July 1795—one Other Grant, number twelve hundred and three for four hundred acres—Granted the 18th July 1795—one other Grant N^o. twelve hundred and four—for five hundred

* Manuscript frayed.

acres, Granted the 18th July 1795—one other Grant Number, twelve hundred and five, for Six hundred and forty acres—Granted the 18th. July 1795—One Other Grant, number twelve hundred and six, for four hundred acres—Granted the 18th July 1795—One Other Grant, Number Twelve hundred and Eighteen, for two hundred Acres, Granted the Tenth day of [2] December one thousand seven hundred and Ninety five—one other Grant number twelve hundred and nineteen for two hundred acres—Granted the 10th December 1795—One other Grant, number Twelve hundred and twenty for two hundred acres—Granted the 10th of December 1795—and one other Grant Number twelve hundred and Twenty one, for Three hundred and Twenty Acres—Granted the 10th day of December one Thousand seven hundred and ninety five – Amounting to Sixteen Thousand six hundred and thirty acres Granted to David Allison as aforesaid, also all them Tracts or Parcels of Land amounting to sixty six Thousand Eighteen acres Granted to John Gray Blount as aforesaid, known by the following Tracts—(Viz.) on Grant N^o. One Thousand & fifty, for five Thousand Seven hundred and fifty acres Granted the twenty sixth day of December 1794—one other Grant, Number one Thousand and fi[f]ty one for Five Thousand one hundred and twenty acres, Granted the 26th of Dec^r. 1794—one Other Grant number One Thousand and fifty two, for four Thousand four hundred and Eighty Acres—Granted the 26th December 1794—one Other Grant Number One Thousand and fifty three, for Nine Thousand six hundred acres, Granted the 26th. . December 1794 one other Grant Number One Thousand and fifty four, for Thirty one Thousand Three hundred and sixty acres, Granted the 26th December 1794—One other Grant number one Thousand and fifty five, for three Thousand four hundred and sixty nine Acres, Granted the 26th. . Dec^r. . 1794. one One [*sic*] other Grant, Number one Thousand and Sixty two, for six hundred and forty acres Granted the 22^d. of April 1795—one other Grant, Number One Thousand and sixty three for six hundred and forty acres, Granted the 23^d of April 1795—One other Grant Number One Thousand sixty four for six hundred and forty acres Granted the 23^d. April 1794—One other Grant N^o. one thousand and sixty five for six hundred and forty acres. Granted the 23^d of April 1795—and one other Grant, number one Thousand & sixty six for sixteen Hundred and sixty nine acres. Granted the 23^d of April 1794—A description of the aforesaid Several tracts of Land

may be more fully had by Reference being had at the Secretaries office of the State aforesaid—

This Indenture therefore witnesseth, that the said Philimon Hodge Sheriff of Cumberland C[ounty as]* aforesaid, for in consideration of the above mentioned sum of seventy two T[housand]———* shillings to him paid in hand, before the sealing and signing of these pres[ents the]* receipt thereof is hereby acknowledged, he the said Philimon Hodge, sheriff, doth hereby bargain, sell, ——* and confirm unto the said John Strother his heirs, Exrrs, Admrs, or assigns forever, all [the aforesaid]* Premises, with all its ways, woods, waters, water-courses mines minerals, hereditaments, and ap[ur]tenances to the said land belonging or in any wise appertaining to hold to him the said John Strother his heirs and assigns forever, in as full and as ample a manner as the said sheriff is empowered by virtue of his office of sheriff aforesaid to do; and further the said Philimon Hodge, sheriff, doth [hereby war]*rant, promise and grant to and with the said John Strother his heirs &c to warrand and defend th——* Premises to the said John Strother his heirs &c. against the claim or claims of the said Allison and Blount or any other person or persons so far as his office of sheriff will admit of and no further—

In Witness whereof the said Philimon Hodge sheriff as aforesaid doth hereunto set his hand ——* the day & year above written—

Signed, [sealed],* and delivered

—————*

Memo of Taxes¹⁹

[May 1, 1798]

Statement of Taxes Viz^t.

Onslow for 1795 due on DA

£175:4:4 for 1796. on D^o——

on 160.368 acres a $\frac{3}{4}$

p 100 acres ——

} 267.54/£442.9.8

* Manuscript faded.

¹⁹ This memorandum is included to demonstrate the constant problem of the Blounts, that of meeting the deadlines of the yearly land taxes on their many thousands of acres. Although a very partial list, it also indicates something of the size of some of the Blount holdings.

Carteret County Vizt. —

46720 Acres at 2/10 p 100
acres 66.3.2.

Jones County Vizt. —————*

121729 Acres at 2/4 p 100 acres

14720 Sold G. Denison

107009 a 2/4 p 100 acres 124:17.0

Craven County——Vizt.

62960 acres a 2/ p 100 acres

£62.19.3 Sold at Vendue

2nd Dec^r 1797 by Jn^o Latham

for

64:1.0

paid at Onslow imp^t

£50—697:10:10

Carteret—— 15

Jones 30 95.——

£:602.10:10

Statement May 1st 1798

John Gray Blount-Luke Robinson Indenture²⁰

[June 9, 1798]

This Indenture made the ninth day of June in the year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and ninety eight Between John Gray Blount of the County of Beaufort and State of North Carolina of the one part and Luke Robinson of the County and State aforesaid of the other part Witnesseth that the said John Gray Blount for and in consideration of the Sum of One Thousand Pounds Currant money to him in hand paid by the said Luke Robinson at and before the sealing and delivering of these Presents the Receipt whereof the said John Gray Blount doth hereby acknowledge Hath given granted bargained and sold aliened enfeoffed released and confirmed; and by these Presents doth give grant bargain and sell alien enfeoff release and confirm unto the said Luke Robinson his Heirs and Assigns forever the following Tracts or parcels of Land Situate lying and being in the County of Bladen towit One Tract on the East side of the White

* Illegible.

²⁰ This was a land sale that involved Blount in a great deal of litigation, as the land he sold here (and guaranteed title of) was soon to be sold by the sheriff for unpaid taxes. See Blount to Thomas Brown, October 23, 1798, in this volume; Deposition of Richard Blackledge, March 1, 1802, in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

marsh and bounded as follows Beginning at a Stake and runs South 75 E^t. 30 Chains then North 15 E^t. 30 Chains to a pine then north 75 W^t. 30 Chains to a Hickory then to the beginning containing Six Hundred and forty Acres of Land which Land was granted to, Joseph Sowl in the year 1735 and by him [2] conveyed to John Gibbs one other Tract of two Hundred Acres adjoining the above on the East side thereof and which was granted to John Gibbs also one other Tract of three Hundred Twenty Acres adjoining the first mentioned tract on the West side thereof including the marsh Also one other piece or parcel of Land on the Jacky Branch patented by John Powell and by him conveyed to Edmond Holmes and by the said Holmes conveyed to John Gibbs (sealing and reserving fifteen Acres of the two first mentioned Tracts of Land at the Corner and adjoining the pine at the end of the Line South 75 East which is joining the place on which said Edmond Holmes lives which has been conveyed by John Gibbs to said Holmes & is excepted in John Gibbs Jun^r. and to me) together with all and singular the Appurtenances thereunto belonging or in any wise appertaining (except as before excepted) To have and to hold the aforesaid four Tracts of Land and Premises with all the appurtenances thereunto excepted (except as before excepted) unto the said Luke Robinson his Heirs and Assigns forever, to the only proper use benefit and behoof of him the said Luke Robinson his Heirs and Assigns and the said John Gray Blount for himself his Heirs Executors and administrator's doth [3] covenant and agree with the said Luke Robinson that he the said John Gray Blount is sole Owner of the aforementioned four Tracts of Land and the same will warrant and forever depend unto the said Luke Robinson his Heirs and Assigns forever (except as before excepted) against the claim of all Persons whatsoever In witness whereof the said John Gray Blount hath hereunto set his Hand and affixed his Seal this day & date first above written Signed Sealed & Delivered

in presence of

J. G. Blount

Seal

Reading Blount

Will Orr

Newbern 26th. July

1800

The execution of the above deed was then acknowledged before me by J. G. Blount.

Let it be registered

John Louis Taylor. JSC&C

*Governor Ashe to The General Assembly*²¹The honb^l. General Assembly

[1798]

Gentlemen

The Laws & Journals of Congress & the Laws of several of the States transmitted to me for the use of the Legeslature of this state I have deposited in the Secretaries Office Such Letters & dispatches that I have rec^d. since your last Session & that merit your attention my Secretary now lays before you

I am to inform you, that in persuance of, and immediately after the passing of the Resolve, at the last Session, for taking into possession the Books & papers of Armstrongs office I sent off an Express to the Executive of the State of Tennessee requesting his aid in behalf of this State, for the seising & safe keeping those Books and papers till the arival of the Commissioners appointed by this State for the receiving and conveying them here—upon the reception of my Letter Governor Sevier without delay requested the Judges Tatom & McNairy to demand & receive on behalf of this State from Gen^l. Armstrong all the Books & papers belonging to his office; and to safely keep them till the arrival of the Commissioners aforementioned; that in consequence of which request they did demand them, and that they were readily surrendered by Mr. Armstrong & placed in the custody of Judge Tatom for the above purpose But upon the arivel of your Commissioners M. Tatom refused to deliver them over to them; assigning his reasons for such refusal in his Letter to me marked A & now laid before you [2] Go^v. Sevier likewise afterwards by an equally strange and unaccountable reverse of conduct & opinion had an advisere with the two Attorneys Gen^l. of that State & upon their opinion a Copy of which marked B is also laid before you, directed a redelivering or resecuring them from your Commissioners in case they had received them—These glossy reasons of the Judge & of the Attorney Gen^l. I considered too puerile & flimsey to merit an answer & I returned none; they only fixed a conviction on my mind that the true reason for not delivering the papers remained latent, and that no arguments however forceable would effect a delivery—and I believe, that you Gen. upon reading these reasons & adverting to all circumstances will coincide in sentiments with me. How men, not under

²¹ The first three-fifths of this is a transcript of Governor Ashe's message. After that it is a summary along with unfriendly personal comment on the Governor and his actions. See Thomas to John Gray Blount, May 17, 1798, in this volume.

the influence of the moon should take up the whimsical Idea that the entries & memorandums of your Surveyors made for the better regulation of his business should become the Records of the State of Tennessee I cant conceive

They urge in objection that the office being fixed by Law could not by a Resolve be removed to any other place; That objection was it in point might have its faver, but the Resolve neither directs nor contemplates a removal of the office, it only requires that the papers &c. should be brought up for the inspection of your board of enquiry for the purpose of detecting & punishing frauds And this laudable measure it might have been supposed would have had the concurrence of every honest man in or out of Tennessee; but allowing the full force of the objection by what right or authority did they intermeddle? [3] The office & officer are yours, the papers appertaining to the office yours or his, & thro [sic] within that State are as exempt from its Jurisdiction as if the office had been held within these Walls

Judge Tatum has behaved with such apparent duplicity & inconsistency, that I am unavoidably led to make some unpleasant strictures upon his conduct—let it be remembered that at my instance thro Gov^r. Sevier Judge Tatum engaged in the behalf of this State in the agency of the business, that in behalf of this State he demanded & received the papers from your officer, no scruples—no questions then arose in his mind about the propriety of the measure, or whither they were Records or other papers or to the legality of removing them from a fixed office & a sworn officer, but upon the arivel of your Commissioners the scene instantly changed, the matter became serious, & wore a threatening aspect, the craft appeared to be in danger, an alarm was given, the bells rung backward, opinions & measures were reversed; the agency of the Judge in behalf of this State immediatley sunk into oblivion, and he assumes a new character, he becomes the Guardian, the grand depository of all the Rights & privileges of the People of Tennessee The papers too changed their appearance & consequence; so lately the common entries & memorandums of Armstrongs office, in a moment became the solemn records, the domesday Books of the People of Tennessee [1 word illegible] in the custody of the Judge as sacred deposits; the Gov^r. too heard & seem'd to feel the alarm he convened his sages of the Law took an advisore upon the momentous question; they shrewdly discovered his error & advised [4] the reserving the papers, he therefore counteracted his first friendly measures & gave the un-

warrantable order for securing them upon a refusal to redeliver[.] I will say no more upon the subject, but refer you to the pile of Letters marked C. & now laid before you for a more full & perfect information of the transaction

Upon the representation made to me of the great risque that would attend the conveyance of those Books & papers from Tennessee to this place I thought it necessary for their better security to appoint four Commissioners to escort them thro the Wilderness into this State & then has only to proceed with them to the office here

Soon after the rising of the last Session of the Gen^l. Assembly the Comptrollers office (wherein were deposited by order of the honble Houses all the Books & papers appertaining to military grants) was broken into²² in the night & a large Chest of papers & a Trunk said to be Tyrrells with papers also were taken out & the Trunk bore off to some distance, but haply both Chest & trunk were recovered I believe without loss or injury to the papers; This daring attempt evinced the desperateness of the parties to these frauds & the necessity of having the papers secured under a Guard, I therefore for their security appointed a nightly Guard of two men, but upon receiving the two Letters the Copies of which marked D instead of the originels for the reasons that will obviously occur in the reading of them together with the Letter signed with the name of Algenon Sidney are laid before you giving intelligence of the horrid and diabolical plan of distroying all the public papers & the State House in one general conflagration. I convened the Council of State and communicated the matter to them, who considering the Treasury also at [5] hazard advised the increasing the Guard to six or more men with officer for as long time as I should think necessary I accordingly increased the Guard to [*sic*] untill the execution of the felon P——— a Slave of Tyrrells convicted for the above buglary & stealing; after his execution conceiving that the spirit & audacity of the Villains [was] broken to save expences to the Public I reduced the Guard to two men, These I thought it prudent to continue till the setting of the Legislature, they have been I believe faithful to their trust they still continue & now

²² The Blounts, along with Sevier, Stockley Donelson, and William Tyrrell were implicated in the attack. For the rest of the story, see Masterson, *William Blount*, 332-334; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 171-175; Carl S. Driver, *John Sevier* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1932), 309-311, hereinafter cited as Driver, *John Sevier*. See also Thomas to John Gray Blount, May 17, 1798, in this volume; Memorial of John Gray and Thomas Blount, December 16, 1799; Report of Legislative Committee Investigating Land Frauds, June 6, 1799; Newspaper Clipping, March 4, 1800 in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

wait the direction of the two Houses either to be discharged or continued

Then proceeds to tell that he had written to the Governor of South Carolina & Tennessee on the subject of running the Lines of the States that SC had refused & no answer from Tennessee He next proceeds to relate what had passed between him & the Police of Wilmington Cap^t. McRea &, about Arms sent by Secretary of War saying for the use of the State account 1500 stand with two Brass field p^s. &c. of no moment recommended the state to provide more arms & men &c.

Then recommends amendments to the Constitution proposed by Massachusetts & when unanimously adopted which he has no doubt will be have but in that he has been mistaken for they are rejected

He then turns in to beg for the unfortunate People of Wilmington ($\frac{3}{4}$ of which hath been burnt) in which he gives a proof that, he hath all his life been improperly imployd at every thing else And that ends his pitiful performance

[6] J^o. McNarys Letter to Go^r. Ash dated Nashville 13 Feby 1798 says that Judge Tatum & himself had thrown themselves in the way of ——— on purpose And that he express'd his concern at the imputation cast upon his character by his former intimacy with some of the persons charged and at length sayd he had a knowledge of something which he wished to communicate but that his life was at stake that the connection was powerful & that if his name was known he should be murdered but permitted them to state the thing to the Go^v. which was that the state House was to be robb'd of the papers. & if that could not be otherwise effected to be burnt but the Gov. was to be enjoined to secrecy until that man arrived safe at Raleigh to be made an evidence [?] that he intended to be at Raleigh in April that the business would be done before 15th March

That a strict examination of Armstrongs office will impeach a number of Characters

The plan for destruction of papers was concerted at Knoxville he says about 2 days ago

Report of Legislative Committee Investigating Land Frauds²³

²³ This is the last of three sections of a report printed in the *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, December 31, 1799. The other two sections of the report dealt with general types of frauds, which fell into eleven categories, including erasure and replacement of names on entries, grants made in blank, issuance of duplicate and original warrants for different lands, and numerous other frauds. The total amount of land involved was estimated at six or seven hundred thousand acres. *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, December 24, 1799; Driver, *John Sevier*, 309-311; Thomas to John Gray Blount, May 17, 1798, in this volume; Memorial of John Gray and Thomas Blount, December 16, 1799, in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

(C)

His Excellency, Wm. R. Davie, Esq.

SIR,

[Raleigh, June 6, 1799]

It was the care of the last Board of Commissioners for the investigation of frauds committed in the office of the late Secretary, not to interfere generally with such of that business has had been thoroughly examined and reported on by the former Board.

But as the duplicate warrants issued from the office of John Armstrong, and in which John Gray Blount and Thomas Blount, had a concern, although selected and reported on by the former Board, were perhaps not so arranged and methodized in the books accompanying their report, as might be necessary to a full and complete knowledge of so important an object, the Commissioners have made them an exception to this rule. In obedience to the wishes of your Excellency, they have prepared lists which are appended to this supplementary report, and in which those warrants are most precisely stated. In these lists your Excellency will perceive that we have referred to distinct classes.

Those duplicate warrants drawn by the Blounts, where they had made no assignment either of the original or duplicate, but where they had obtained grants on the one, and Donelson and Tyrrell on the other.

Those cases where they assigned the original to James King, and obtained grants for themselves on the duplicate.

Those cases where they have obtained grants on the duplicate, and assigned the original to Donelson and Tyrrell.

And those cases in which they have obtained grants on the duplicates and assigned the originals to Stockly Donelson, who thereupon obtained grants for himself.

And those cases in which they have obtained grants on the duplicates, and assigned the originals to Stockly Donelson, who also assigned one half of his interest to others, and obtained grants in conjunction with such assignees.

There have been no assignments from the enterers to the Blounts that we have been able to discover; the assignments from the Blounts to others we take to be genuine, and not forged, as the former Board appear to have imagined.

There are other instances of duplicate warrants which had issued from the office of John Armstrong; but as we believe that not more than one duplicate has in such instance issued to any one person (unless in cases where such duplicate has been returned into the Comptroller's' office) and as they are detailed

with accuracy in book L of the former Board, we thought it unnecessary to refer them to separate lists.

We have the honour to be, &c.

[Basil Gaither.]

[Samuel D. Purviance.]²⁴

Memorial of John Gray and Thomas Blount

MEMORIAL OF JOHN AND THOMAS BLOUNT:²⁵

[December 16, 1799]

To the Honourable the General Assembly of North Carolina.
The memorial of John Gray Blount and Thomas Blount, respectfully sheweth:

That your Memorialists were greatly astonished, and no less mortified, when they heard that the Commissioners appointed by your honourable body in the year 1797, to examine the papers in the office of the Secretary of State, and in the office of John Armstrong, had reported that their names had been used for the purpose of obtaining duplicate warrants contrary to law, for lands entered in the office kept by the said John Armstrong: and from that moment, feeling conscious that they could not justly be accused, either jointly or separately, of any fraud or other offence against the laws of their country, they have constantly felt, expressed, and in a variety of other ways manifested an anxious wish that the Legislature, in their wisdom, would devise some speedy and effectual measure for investigating the subject before a court of justice, and bringing the offenders to condign punishment, as such a measure must have enabled them to prove their own innocence. But your Memorialists, after remaining two years exposed, by the concealment of the report of the Commissioners above referred to, and the neglect of the Legislature and officers of the state to act thereon, to the most rancorous calumnies—

²⁴ In January, 1799, Governor Davie appointed two highly respected public men to investigate the land frauds more thoroughly. Basil Gaither of Rowan County was in either the House of Commons or the State Senate almost continuously from 1788 through 1802. Samuel D. Purviance represented Cumberland County in the House of Commons in 1798 and 1799 and in the State Senate in 1801. He defeated Federalist William Barry Grove for the United States House of Representatives in 1803 and served there one term. Robinson, *Davie*, 308, 311-312; Wagstaff, *Papers of John Steele*, I, 93, n.2, 327, n.1, 195, n.4, 370, n.1; Wheeler, *Sketches*, II, 131, 132, 398; *Biographical Congressional Directory*, 1488.

²⁵ From the *Journal of the Senate*, 1799, 42-43. This Memorial was introduced by Thomas Blount, member from Edgecombe. See Thomas to John Gray Blount, January 6, 1800, in this volume.

have had the mortification to see the first effort of the General Assembly to punish the guilty, and do justice to injured innocence, frustrated by the rejection of a bill proposing to establish a court for the trial of persons who may have transgressed the laws of the state, by having been concerned in the commission of certain frauds; and therefore they respectfully solicit your honourable body, to take their case, as they are now attending in person, and not only willing, but anxious, to meet any enquiry or examination that may be deemed necessary and proper for the attainment of justice, into their serious considerations, and grant them such relief, not inconsistent with the public good, as their individual sufferings may seem to entitle them to: and the more plain [43]ly to shew to your honourable body what their individual sufferings have been and still are, your Memorialist John Gray Blount, first above named begs leave to state for your information, that Thomas Blount, your Memorialist last above mentioned, has never within his knowledge or belief, had or exercised any agency in the business of John Gray Blount and Thomas Blount, in relation to lands entered for them in the office of John Armstrong: and that he does not know or believe, that the said Thomas Blount ever entered a single acre of land in that office, for himself or any other person, or that he has at any time seen a warrant issued from that office to or for John Gray Blount and Thomas Blount.

JOHN G. BLOUNT
THOMAS BLOUNT

Raleigh, December 16, 1799

The foregoing memorial being read, Mr. Blount moved that it be referred to the committee to whom were referred the Governor's messages No. 1, 2 and 3, with instructions to exhibit to the view of John G. Blount and T. Blount, when they or either of them shall request to see the same, all the papers referred to by the report of the Commissioners accompanying the Governor's messages aforesaid; and ask them and each of them, such questions relative thereto, as shall appear to the committee to be necessary to the attainment of justice between the said John G. Blount and Thomas Blount, and the state. And to report their proceedings therein, with their opinion whether any, and if any, what further proceedings will be necessary in their case.

This motion was rejected,²⁶ and the memorial ordered to lie on the table.

*Newspaper Clipping*²⁷

Nashville, March 4.

Gen. Martin Armstrong, Surveyor of Military Lands, Tennessee.
March 1st, 1800.

Sir,

Having seen the act passed by the legislative body of the State of North-Carolina at the last session, which suspends you from office of Surveyor of Military Lands in this State, and directs that the records in your hands, be delivered to the person appointed as your successor in office²⁸—we think it our duty as representatives of the good citizens of the county of Davidson, and composing a part of the Legislature of this State, to inform you, that at our last session of the General Assembly, a resolution was passed by both houses, declaring the books of records in your hands to be the property of the State of Tennessee.²⁹

We furthermore take the liberty of stating to you, that it is our opinion, that the officer appointed by the State of North-Carolina to succeed you, has been appointed without proper authority, and is by no means entitled to receive possession of those records, and that you would fail in your duty to this State, (whose officer you probably have been since the passage of the cession act) were you to permit that officer to take those records into his possession, or to have any other access to them than what is allowed to other citizens of the United States.

We are, Sir,

Your most obt. hble, servts.

Joel Lewis,

R. Weakley,

Wm. Neelly,

George M. Deaderick,

Wm. Dickson.

²⁶ In the two years since the frauds were detected the legislative committee had not published its report and only in late 1799 were any of those suspected brought to trial. Unsuccessful in their attempts to be tried by a special court, the Blount brothers were tried by a District Court in New Bern. Robinson, *Davie*, 311-312; Masterson, *William Blount*, 332-334; Keith, "Three North Carolina Blount Brothers," 303; Election Circular—Thomas Blount, July 25, 1800, in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume.

²⁷ From *The Tennessee Gazette* (Nashville), March 4, 1800. The whole issue is not extant, but the next issue (No. 9) is March 11, 1800.

²⁸ The act was part of North Carolina's attempt to straighten out the land office scandals. Thomas to John Gray Blount, May 17, 1798, in this volume.

²⁹ For other Tennessee reaction to the investigation, see Governor Ashe to the General Assembly, 1798 in "Other Papers For 1796-1802," in this volume; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 171-173.

Election Circular-Thomas Blount

[July 25, 1800]

TO THE INDEPENDENT FREEMEN AND ELECTORS OF
ELECTION DISTRICT No. 9.³⁰

FELLOW-CITIZENS

The subjoined Transcript and statement of the proceedings had on a Bill of Indictment for misdemeanor, The State vs. Thomas Blount, in Newbern Superior Court, July Term, 1800, and the Certificates accompanying it, will prove to you, that I have been fully tried on the charge of fraud alledged to have been committed in the name of John G. and Thomas Blount, on the Land Office of this state, and honorably acquitted. And as such an acquittal cannot fail to efface the unfavourable impressions which have been made upon your minds by the many slanderous reports upon the subject that have been now more than two years circulating against me, and restore to me that confidence with which, previous to the circulation of such reports, you always honoured me; I cannot, believing as I do, that my political principles & conduct have always received the approbation of a very large majority of you, discharge my duty either to you or myself, without making you at this time another tender of my services—You will therefore be pleased to consider me a Candidate at the approaching Election for the Honor of Representing you in the next Congress of the United States. The date of my Trial, which, owing to a variety of circumstances, and among others the want of a material Witness who resided in the state of Tennessee, I could not sooner obtain, will, I trust be deemed by you a sufficient apology for my delay in making this declaration. With the warmest gratitude for the confidence which you have heretofore thought proper to repose in me, and an assurance that I shall always endeavour to merit a continuance of it,

I remain your faithful Friend,
and obedient humble servant.
THOMAS BLOUNT.

Tarborough, July 25, 1800.

³⁰ See Thomas Blount to John Haywood, July 31, 1800; and Thomas to John Gray Blount, May 17, 1800, in this volume. Besides being issued as a handbill, this was also printed in Joseph Gales' *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*, August 12, 1800.

State of North-Carolina
Newbern District.

Superior Court of Law
July Term, 1800.

THE STATE	}	INDICTMENT for MISDEMEANOR.
vs.		
Thomas Blount		

The following Jury being impaneled, sworn and charged, viz,

Charles Williams,	James Easter,	Thomas Worsley,
William Cox,	Richard Cogdell,	Slade Pearce,
Philip Neale,	David Frater,	Adin Powell,
	Christopher Mallison,	
	Jones Spencer	
	Benjamin Tyson,	

FIND THE DEFENDANT NOT GUILTY, AND SO THEY SAY ALL.

I CERTIFY that the above is a true transcript and statement of the proceeding had on the bill of Indictment, charging the defendant with having fraudulently obtained a grant from the state to John Gray Blount and Thomas Blount, on a duplicate warrant, No. 1663, and afterwards having fraudulently & knowingly obtained a second Grant to the said John Gray Blount and Thomas Blount, on the original Warrant of the same number.—I further certify, that another Bill [of] Indictment was preferred and found against the said Thomas Blount, agreeing with the above mentioned Bill in every circumstance, except as to the number of the Warrant and the name of the Enterer; on which last mentioned Bill a *nolle prosequi* was entered by the Attorney-General.

And I further certify that both the above mentioned Bills were preferred and found against John Gray Blount and Thomas Blount; and that on the first mentioned Bill they were tried separately at their request, and that John Gray Blount was also acquitted upon the Indictment which was tried, and the Attorney-General entered a *nolle prosequi* on the other as to both.

ATTEST

S. W. ARNETT, C. S. C. L. Newbern District.
Newbern 25th July, 1800.

WE having been impannelled on the trial of Thomas Blount, indicted for procuring a Grant to issue on a duplicate Warrant, No. 1663; and also on another Grant on the original Warrant, No.

1663; Do Certify, that the evidence adduced to us on the part of the said Thomas Blount, was so fully and completely to his exculpation, that we did, without hearing counsel, who indeed declined to remark on the testimony, give a verdict for his acquittal, without retiring from the Bar.

Rd. Cogdell, Adin Powell, Christopher Mallison,
Slade Pearce, Ben. Tyson, James Easter, Philip Neale, Sen.
David Frater, Charles Williams, Thomas Worsley, Wm. Cox,

N. B. JONES SPENCER, the other Juror impannelled on this Trial, obtained his discharge from the Court, and left town before this Certificate was presented for signature.

Newbern, July 25, 1800.

WE were present when the trial of Thomas Blount was had on an indictment charging him with having caused and procured a Grant for land, on a Duplicate Warrant, issued from John Armstrong's office, Number 1663, and for afterwards causing and procuring a grant to issue on the original warrant of the same number. We attended to the testimony, as well on the one side as on the other; and do perfectly coincide in opinion with the Jury, that there was not any colour for believing him guilty. The Jury did not retire from the Bar—and we are of opinion they acted properly, in not hesitating to pronounce the verdict they did, of NOT GUILTY.

W. Slade, E. Harris, I. L. Guion, Dan. Carthy,
John Haywood, John Stanly, Ben Woods, F. X. Martin,
Edward Graham, Wm. Gaston,

Thomas Topping Bill and Receipt³¹

[July 25, 1801]

Thomis Toping Deter [Debtor] for Word down on the Mil of
Reding Blunts began September in 1800
to my felor Sam 2 days at 5 for day £ 0 – 10 – 0
Desember the first Wek 2 hands 3 days

³¹ Thomas Topping, like John Gaylard, was a workman himself and an overseer of slave labor. See John Gaylard to Blount, April 23, 1802; and Thomas to John Gray Blount, November 15, 1802, n.80, in this volume.

at 6 for day a pece	1 - 16 - 0
the second Wek 2 hands on Mondy 4 hands	
from Mondy 16 tel. Satrday 3 hands on Satrday	
this Wek ^s . Work 21 days their bord found at 6	6 - 6 - 0
	<hr/>
	8 . 12 . 0
January the 10—to 1 days Work of Sam	0 . 5 . 0
Febary the 10 day to 2 hands 3 days apese	
Which is 6 days	1 16 0
	<hr/>
	£10 . 13 . 0

Rc^d. the Above infull,
25th. July 1801 " Jn^o- Gaylord Ad.ⁿ

Deposition of Richard Blackledge³²

[March 1, 1802]

Pursuant to a Commission to me Directed from the Honble the Superior Court for the District of Newbern, to take the Deposition of Richard Blackledge a Suit in said Court Depending wherein Luke Roberson is Plaintiff and Francis Harvey is defendant. the said Richard appeared before me Richard Cogdell one of the Justices of the Peace of Beaufort County and being duly Sworn on the Holy Evangelist of Almighty God deposeth & Sayeth as follows Viz^t.

That as the Agent of David Allison he was Employed to Superintend the Locating Surveying & procureing the grants of Five Hundred Thousand Acres of Land for and on his Account, with George Ogg & C^o. in the Countys of Bladen, Roberson, Cumberland Richmond & Moore. In which John Gray Blount had no Interest and after that as an Agent he was Employed by James Porterfield & C^o. to enter, Survey & Procure Grants, for all other Lands that Could be had, and was Directed to Locate the Same in such names as might best Serve his Purpose [2] and in this Last Quantity of Land John Gray Blount had an Interest. And Accordingly the said Richard Blackledge did proceed to Enter in such Manner & way, as was thought best for both Concerns, & proceeded to Enter in Bladen County as fair as about Two Hundred Thousand in the Name of John Gray Blount & Carried them into Grants, in his Name. and About the time the first Lands was granted, the Lands entered for Ja^s Porterfield & C^o. in which

³² See Blount to Thomas Brown, October 23, 1798, in this volume. This is part of the Blount litigation over the so-called White Marsh lands. See John Gray Blount-Luke Robinson Indenture, June 9, 1798 in "Other Papers for 1796-1802," in this volume.

Jn^o. Gray Blount was Interested was sold by Said James Porterfield to David Allison when he become solely interested in all the Lands in both Concerns, which transaction took place in the Month of January in year One Thousand Seven Hundred & Ninety five and was then made known and Generally understood in the County of Bladen—As the Agent of David Allison I paid the Tax on those Lands for the year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety Five and the same year for about One Thousand Acres of land in Bladen County in the White Marsh, called the Gibbs lands in which then no person but [3] John Gray Blount had aney Interest. for the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred & Ninety Six I again paid the Taxes, as before Stated and on the first of Dec^r. or thereabouts in the year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety Eight went on to git Mr Harvey not to Sell Allisons Lands for the Taxes, I then informed him that, the white marsh Lands commonly Called the Gibbs Lands was the Property of Luke Roberson and not of John Gray Blount & then offerd to pay the Taxes of the Same which he refused to receive unless I would pay up all the Taxes of Allison and said the White Marsh Lands as was Called should make good the Taxes on the other Lands meaning the Lands of David Allison in which John Gray Blount had been formerly Interested, tho had not been for Nearly three Years before. that is to say from January One Thousand Seven Hundred & Ninety five, when the Taxes of Ninety five and had been formerly Interested, tho had not been for Nearly three Years before. that is to say from January One Thousand Seven Hundred & Ninety five, when the Taxes of Ninety five and Ninety Six was paid it was then & at different Other times made known to Francis Harvey by me that the Lands except the Lands called the Gibbs or white Marsh Lands were David Allisons and not Jn^o Gray Blounts and in [4] Dec^r 1798. it was then made known to him by me the Lands Called the Gibbs or white Marsh Land were Luke Robersons and not John Gray Blounts And further this Deponant sayeth not

The above Deposition was taken Subscribed and Sworn to at the Counting House of John Gray Blount in Washington one Monday the 1st day of March 1802 about the Hour of Four OClock in the afternoon by the said

R^d. Cogdell J. P.

R^d. Blackledge

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